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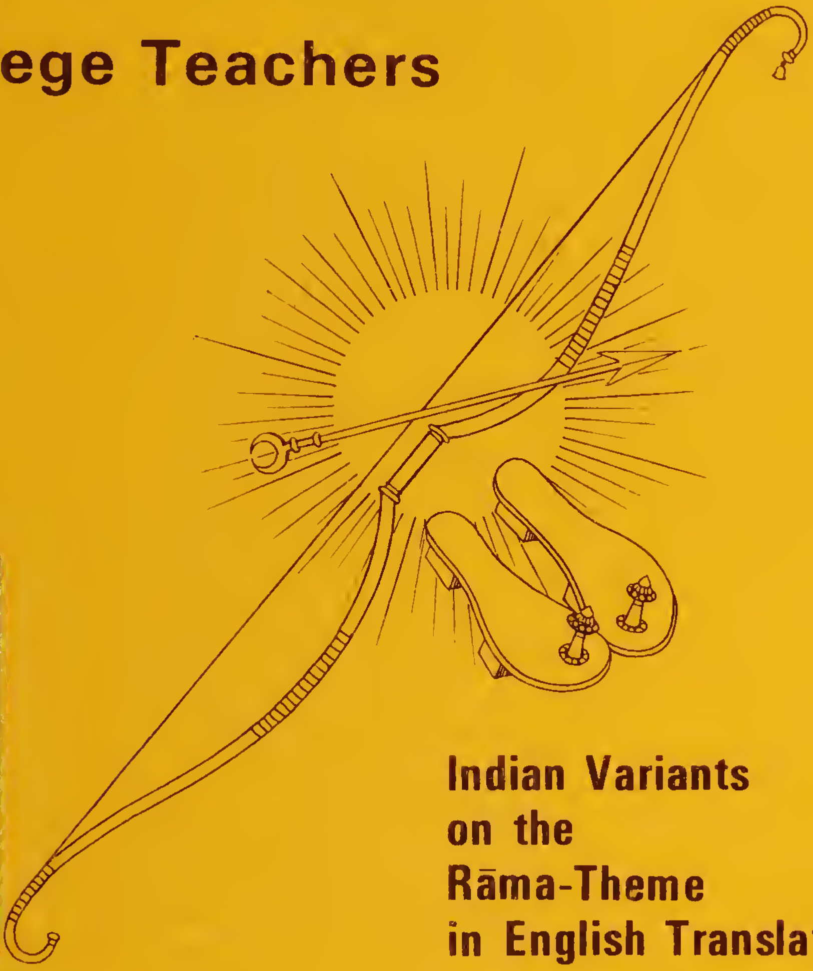
READING THE RĀMAYĀṆA:

A Bibliographic Guide for Students and College Teachers



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Indian Variants on the Rāma-Theme in English Translations

by
H. Daniel Smith

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Foreign and Comparative Studies
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Permit me the privilege of inserting an *errata* sheet, incomplete though it may be.

On page 7, there should be a footnote: The *Sundara-kāṇḍa* will be translated by Professor Goldman, while the translator of the *Araṅya-kāṇḍa* has not yet been announced.

On page 23, note that in the USA the Amar Chitra Katha series is now handled by Famous Overseas Corporation, 45-15 Barnett Avenue, Long Island City, NY, 11104.

On page 45, there should be a footnote: It was K.A. Nilakanta Sastri who described the *Raṅganātha Rāmāyaṇa* as "...a work of great simplicity and sweetness and full of apt similes," p. 391, A History of South India (Madras: Oxford University Press, 1955).

On page 51, line 15, change "nearly half again" to read "scarcely half."

On page 55, end of first paragraph, fill in the blank with "108ff."

On page 81, line 4, change "less out of necessity" to read "less of a necessity."

On page 82, line 15, change "(then Ceylon)" to read "(i.e., Ceylon)".

I wish to thank Mary Beth Ritter for her typing of the manuscript as well as for her design of the cover and layout of the map. I wish also to thank Guy Beck for his help in proofreading the camera-ready copy. There are *many* mistakes which remain in the text, and for those I assume full responsibility. I shall be grateful to hear from readers who are able to help me correct those mistakes.

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Foreword

Readers who turn to the *Rāmāyaṇa* for the first time will find it useful to know that many different versions of the story of Rāma are currently in circulation. Some are survivals from early centuries. Others are of more recent invention. All testify to the fascination that the adventures of the exiled Prince of Ayodhya have had through the ages for the multitudes who inhabit broad stretches of South and Southeast Asia, not to mention more recent admirers in the West.

One historian of the tradition, Father Camille Bulcke, has enumerated and identified approximately 300 texts based on the Rāma-story in India alone.* This figure is the more impressive when one adds to it the numerous pageants, folk dramas, song cycles, dance performances and communal celebrations known throughout the land which, although based on the Rāma-legend, do not qualify as conventional texts. And, if one takes into account the innumerable variations--whether literary documents or popular performances--in countries beyond India where the influence of the *Rāmāyaṇa* has been felt, the cultural impact of this story represents a phenomenon of major proportions.

This essay undertakes to focus mainly on the literary variants of the Rāma-theme which originated in India and, moreover, limits its notice to works available in the English language. References are made for the most part to full translations from the languages of the Indian originals; occasionally, however, attention is called also to substantial outlines and to freely rendered résumés in English which may be deemed useful for study. The titles mentioned here are but a small sampling of the mass of literature produced in Sanskrit and Prakrit, as well as in

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***Ramkatha-Utpatti aur vikas* (Hindi). Allahabad: Hindi Parishat, Prayag Visvavidyalaya, 1962 (2nd edition; orig., 1950). English translation by R.K. Barz due for early publication from Australia.

the more modern Indian vernaculars, based on the perennially rehearsed story. It will suffice, however, to serve as a guide for highly motivated college students and their teachers who may wish to acquaint themselves, through further reading, with variants of the Rāma-theme other than Vālmīki's.

Most, if not all, of the citations made in this bibliography refer to documents housed in North American libraries. Many of the titles referred to will be found duplicated in several locations. Some, however, are rare. One in particular (see [78], infra) seems to be unique, for which reason I am indebted to Dr. Maureen Patterson for having made known to me its availability at the Regenstein Library (University of Chicago). With fewer than half-a-dozen exceptions, I have looked at all of the works listed in the following pages. Those which were not part of the holdings of Bird Library (Syracuse University) were located and examined by making site visits to the following places: American Oriental Society Library, Boston Public Library, the Library of Congress, New York Public Library, Olin Library (Cornell University), Sterling Memorial Library (Yale University), the John G. White Collection of Folklore, Orientalia and Chess (Cleveland Public Library), and Widener Library (Harvard University). I wish to thank the staff members at those above-named places for their patience and resourcefulness while helping me during my visits.

STATEMENT OF THE THEME IN VĀLMĪKI

Before considering the variants in Indian literature of the tale of Rāma, it will be useful to pause over the Vālmīki version, often acclaimed as the "foremost" [*ādi-*] among all other retellings of the story. Because Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa* is available in so many English renderings--some justly celebrated, others deservedly obscure--it is not practical to make note of all of them here. This opening section will attempt to identify only some of those renditions which are most likely to be encountered by one who, as a beginning student, turns to read the epic.

Renditions of Vālmīki

(1) [Forthcoming] Goldman, R.P. and Nathan, L.E. (eds.) A new translation of Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa*, based on the Baroda Critical Edition of the Sanskrit text, with annotations. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980s. 7 volumes, to be issued approximately annually starting in 1984.

(2) Shastri, Hari Prasad (tr.) *The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki.* London: Shanti Sadan, 1976 (orig., 1953, 1957, 1959). 3 volumes.

(3) Raghunathan, N. (tr.) *Srimad Vālmīki Ramayanam.* Madras: Vighneswara Publishing House, 1981-82. 3 volumes.

(4) Goswami, Chimmanlal (tr.) *Śrīmad Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa (with Sanskrit Text and English Translation).* Gorakhpur: Gita Press, 1974-76, 2nd edition (orig., 1969). 3 volumes.

(5) Dutt, M.N. (tr.) *The Ramayana.* Calcutta: H.C. Dass, 1891-94. 3 volumes.

(6) Griffith, R.T.H. (tr.) *The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki.* London: Trubner/Banaras: E.J. Lazarus & Co., 1870-74 (reprinted 1895). 5 volumes.

(7) Coomaraswamy, A.K. and Sister Nivedita. *Myths of the Hindus and Buddhists.* New York: Dover Publications [paperback], 1967 (orig., 1913). pp. 23-117.

(8) Raghavan, V. (ed., tr.) *The Indian Heritage.* Bangalore: The Indian Institute of World

Culture, 1963, 3rd edition (orig., 1956). pp. 150-292.

(9) Sarma, D.S. (tr.) *Srimad Ramayana, The Story of the Prince of Ayodhya.* Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1972 (orig., 1946 as *The Prince of Ayodhya*).

(10) Subramaniam, K. (tr.) *Ramayana.* Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1981.

(11) Sen, M.L. (ed., tr.) *The Ramayana of Valmiki.* New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1978, 2nd edition rev. (orig., Calcutta: Datta Bose & Co., 1927-32). [Hardcover and paperback.]

(12) Seeger, Elizabeth. *The Ramayana.* New York: W.R. Scott, 1969.

(13) Griffith, R.T.H. (ed., tr.) *The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki.* Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, Vol. XXIX, 1963, 3rd edition.

(14) Buck, W. *Ramayana: King Rama's Way.* Berkeley: University of California, 1976 [hardcover]; New York: Mentor, 1978 [paperback].

(15) Collis, M. *Quest for Sita: The Central Section of the Sanskrit Epic--The Ramayana.* New York: Capricorn Books, 1965 (orig., New York: John Day, 1947).

(16) Dutt, R.C. (ed., tr.) *The Ramayana and The Mahabharata.* New York: Dutton (Everyman's Library), 1969 (orig., 1899 and 1910).

(17) Rajagopalachari, C. *Ramayana.* Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (Bhavan's Book University, 44), 1979, 19th edition (orig., 1951).

(18) Menon, A. *The Ramayana as told by Aubrey Menon.* New York: Scribner's Sons, 1954.

(19) Ramaswami Naicker, E.V. *The Ramayana: A True Reading.* Trichy: Periyar Self-Respect Propaganda Institute Publications, 1972, 2nd edition (orig., 1959).

(20) Bapu. *Ramayana: The Story of Rama--Retold and Illustrated by BAPU.* Madras: Samskriti International, n.d. [Also available in other languages.]

(21) Smith, H. Daniel (ed.) *Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa in Pictures.* Madras: Higginbothams, 1981.

(22) Smith, H. Daniel (ed.) *The Picturebook Ramayana: An Illustrated Version of Valmiki's Story.* Syracuse: Syracuse University Foreign and Comparative Studies/South Asian Special Publications 3, 1981.

The inexperienced reader who comes upon a rendition purporting to be Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa* should be prepared to assess it immediately on at least two counts. The first is length. As the version of the *Rāmāyaṇa* by Vālmīki which has come down through the centuries is quite long, the length of the version in hand may be an important criterion by which to judge it on a preliminary basis.

To be sure, scholars have different opinions in regard to how much of the bulky classic originated with Vālmīki, how much is pious addition by later hands. But whatever the original "core" may once have been, it is an extended version that tradition has handed down for well over a millenium. That traditional version comprises seven sizable sections containing altogether more than 600 chapters. So, first of all, a full rendering of Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa* will be rather long.

The second assessment has to do with form. The beginning student should be reminded that Vālmīki's original creation was a poem, written in verses of the so-called "*śloka*"-meter. It was not composed as a prose piece. So, whether a rendering is in verse or in prose becomes a pertinent concern.

With these two considerations in mind, the student may deduce from the length and format of the work in hand that it is (a) a complete translation or (b) a condensation, either of which may be in the form of prose or verse. It is possible, of course, that the rendering may be neither of the preceding but rather something else: (c) an imaginative recasting of the story by an author who adds a characteristic, often personal touch to the narrative. All of these variants are circulated, in India and abroad, as the "Vālmīki *Rāmāyaṇa*." In English-speaking countries, many such variants are marketed for classroom use, and most are listed as well in library catalogs under "Vālmīki--*Rāmāyaṇa*." Reader, beware! The following descriptions will assist the student and instructor to identify what may be under consideration for use within the context of other, available renderings in English of Vālmīki's version of the Rāmā-story.

Translations

Just beginning to make its appearance through Princeton University Press is a seven-volume translation of the complete epic (1). This new translation will not be based on the traditional, "vulgate" text of the *Rāmāyaṇa* followed by most earlier translations; rather, it will set a new standard by basing its readings on the recent, "critical edition" produced by a team of eminent textual scholars at the University of Baroda in India. This new translation, with annotations, has been undertaken by a consortium of professors from three countries, the United States, Canada, and England, and is proceeding under the general editorship of R.P. Goldman and L.E. Nathan, both of the University of California at Berkeley. The "*Bāla-kāṇḍa*" translated by Professor Goldman and scheduled to appear first, will be followed at irregular intervals by other *kāṇḍa*s one by one until all seven have been published. Among others comprising the *Rāmāyaṇa* Translation Consortium are: Sheldon Pollack of the University of Iowa ("*Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa*"); J.M. Masson and R. Lefeber, both of the University of Toronto ("*Kishkindhā-kāṇḍa*"); B.A. van Nooten, University of California at Berkeley ("*Yuddha-kāṇḍa*"); and B.K. Matilal of Oxford University ("*Uttara-kāṇḍa*"). This scholarly prose translation, with its annotations, should facilitate access to the subtleties of the Sanskrit poem for serious readers unable to cope with the original.

Meanwhile, other translations based on the traditional, or "vulgate," text are available and remain useful. Perhaps the two best among those currently circulated are published in three volumes. The earliest of these, by the late Hari Prasad

Shastri, is now in its third edition. It is available in paperback (2). Here the entire epic is set forth in readable English prose. Each volume is furthermore provided with lengthy appendices which identify most of the proper names of characters, weapons, and flora so formidable to neophyte readers upon first venturing into the story. While Shastri's prose lacks the cadence and obvious syntactic virtuosity of the original poem, he was nonetheless a conscientious translator, and to his credit it may be said that he adhered to the text with admirable consistency. His style is clear, and with it he succeeds in transmitting a craftsmanlike approximation in prose of the ancient masterpiece.

Much the same may be said of the other, more recent translation by N. Raghunathan (3). This version comes printed in relatively large typeface, and is commendably free of the composing errors which so often plague Indian publications. Only its last volume, however, contains a modest, yet useful, glossary. There are brief but informative essays at the beginning of the first and third volumes (22 and 5 pages respectively, the former of a general, introductory nature, and the latter dealing with the "problem" of the "*Bāla*" and "*Uttara*" *kāṇḍa*s). Teachers familiar with Sanskrit may prefer to use Raghunathan's version because it retains diacritically correct transliterations of proper names and technical terms, while Shastri anglicized his renderings. Raghunathan's hardcover, due to favorable exchange rates and lower production costs, also turns out to be cheaper for classroom use than Shastri's paperback.

For those who may wish to refer to the Sanskrit text as they read a verbatim translation into English prose, another three-volume Indian publication is worthy of mention (4). While the prose style lacks conviction and polish, it is nevertheless useful for students with a rudimentary grasp of the Sanskrit language. The numbered sequences on the lower half of each page correspond to *śloka*-verses in Devanāgarī script from the vulgate text on the upper half of the same page, so that users of this publication may easily refer to the proper verse in the traditional words of the poem. Unfortunately, the translator died before his task was completed; but he did get as far as the 41st chapter of the "*Uttara-kāṇḍa*." Thus this version, although it lacks chapters 42 through 111 of the final section, provides access to a hefty 90 percent of the massive epic. It is now out of print in India, although still available with many booksellers. In the U.S.A., copies of this rendering of the *Rāmāyaṇa* will occasionally be found in bookshops catering to those sectors of the American subculture committed to one or another of the popular personality cults of Hindu origin; the publication is also available through some North American booksellers who deal in South Asian literature. The price for the three-volume set remains remarkably low.

Yet another complete translation of the poem into English prose is available. It was produced late in the nineteenth century by the Indian scholar, M.N. Dutt (5). There is nothing about this rendering to recommend it, however adequate it may have been to readers in its own day.

The enormous and enterprising task of translating the entire epic into English verse was undertaken by Ralph T.H. Griffith during the 1870s. His magnum opus (6) is in the form of rhyming octosyllabic couplets. It is altogether an impressive, at times moving, and thoroughly Victorian rendering of the Vālmīki poem which manages to preserve much of the flavor of the original. It is not, however, something that will long hold the attention of undergraduates unaccustomed to reading verse. A condensed version of this tour de force is available (13), and it is described below.

Condensations

Anything shorter than the full poem in seven substantial sections comprising more than 600 chapters has to be either a condensation of the original or a total recasting of the narrative. For the undergraduate to whom the world of Vālmīki is an alien universe, it may indeed be preferable to begin with an acceptable condensation. An editor usually accomplishes an abbreviation of the Rāma-story by expediently cutting out everything but the basic, narrative elements of the unfolding "plot." Reduction of size inevitably results in alteration of scope; gone will be lengthy, conventional descriptions and poetic nuances, as well as minor characters and subsidiary events. At best, what remains will still have some of the mystery and ambiguity of the unexpurgated original.

The readily available condensations of the Vālmīki *Rāmāyaṇa* vary considerably in size and style. If the epic of the exiled Prince is but one of several reading assignments a student is expected to complete in a survey course, the shorter the acceptable condensation is, the better it meets pedagogical needs. Without doubt, one of the best among the shorter condensations is that done early in this century by A.K. Coomaraswamy (7). Well-written, sensitive to essentials of the narrative structure and to charaterization, this is a rendering of the story admirably suited to a short reading assignment. The student must be forewarned, however, that to skim the fewer than 100 pages of fairly large print within which Coomaraswamy rapidly recapitulates the narrative is to risk missing significant details he has so artfully included. Gone, regrettably, is the overall structure of the seven sections and their respective chapters; in compensation are topically titled subheadings which mark divisions of Coomaraswamy's exposition.

Closer to the original than Coomaraswamy's brief recapitulation is the somewhat longer and stylistically more formal condensation in prose by the late V. Raghavan (8). Unfortunately, Raghavan's retelling is not as easy to locate and to procure as is Coomaraswamy's. Written in lucid prose, the 140 pages of this résumé deserve to be republished separately in an economical paperback format in order to reach the wider audience of students who would benefit from a rendition which remains in so many important ways so faithful to the original. In it, the structure of the original seven *kāṇḍa*s is preserved, along with many of the significant details and imaginative nuances of the Vālmīki poem. One may turn to it with confidence. Because it is brief, it is also suitable for a short-span reading assignment.

Considerably longer, and a faithful recapitulation of the tale so far as it goes, is a rendering of the *Rāmāyaṇa* called *The Prince of Ayodhya* (9). Written by the late, great scholar D.S. Sarma, this accurate rendering is graceful and charming. Its greatest flaw is that in its narrative it goes only to the end of the "*Yuddha-kāṇḍa*." All of the material in the "*Uttara-kāṇḍa*" is thus omitted. For those who take seriously the integrity of the Vālmīki version as it has been transmitted for centuries--with seven *kāṇḍa*s, including the vexsome features of Sītā's second Fire Ordeal and her final abandonment by Rāma, followed by their separate apotheoses--this truncated version by Sarma presents some learning problems. Perhaps Sarma presented the story as he did in order to provide a "happy ending" to the tale; another way to look at what he presents is that it accords, not incidentally, with the structure of the version of the Rāma-story made popular in South India by Kamban--and Sarma was a South Indian. Still, this version scarcely does justice to the enigmatic grandeur of Vālmīki's powerful vision. Thus students assigned to Sarma's rendering should be thoroughly apprised of its shortcoming.

To be sure, it may be a disservice to Sarma to refer to his truncated presentation as a "happy ending" version of the tale, and even more so to view this as a shortcoming. Surely, it is more than mere "sentiment" that has prompted Hindus for a long time to reject the repetitive elements and the unflattering characterization of King Rāma found in Vālmīki's "*Uttara-kāṇḍa*." Indeed, many devotees of the Rāma-story discard out of hand the entire seventh *kāṇḍa* of the vulgate Vālmīki version as a "later addition." This is not the place to argue this complicated set of issues (see, however, the discussions of Kālidāsa and of the Jaina Rāma stories, pages 79 and 111, respectively). Suffice to say that Sarma defers to popular Hindu sentiment when he ends his narrative account with Rāma's coronation. Other translators have likewise edited out the entire, final section of the traditional Vālmīki version of the story (see, for example, [10], which, however, contains a 33-page glossary of terms and characters). Their versions may otherwise be quite commendable; but those responsible for them are disingenuous insofar as they do not make absolutely clear that they have tampered with the received text. And, their versions are not useful to those who are concerned with learning about the Vālmīki text as tradition has preserved it.

Although characterized elsewhere as "... a free and often inaccurate translation of dubious worth,"* Makhan Lal Sen's rendering of the *Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki* (11) should not be dismissed too hastily. A student, given more than a quick week or two to spend on the epic, may read this condensation with great profit. Although it, too, is an abbreviated version, it is nonetheless a substantial one. It preserves 306 of the more than 600 chapters of the Vālmīki original, as well as the structure of the seven *kāṇḍa*s. Both features constitute a plus for serious students. In his prefatory remarks, Sen comments that what he has pruned from the original is "literary prolixity and mere verbosity ... where it has encroached upon the main narrative, or clouded the real issue, or rendered the whole piece a tedious reading." On the whole, he has produced a very readable condensation which conveys both the sweep and the detail intrinsic to the original. To be sure, the quality of the translation is at least awkward now and then [" ... you is ..."]; nor is the transliteration system always consistent. Morover, the numbering of Sen's chapters inevitably differs from the original; thus it is difficult for students to locate in this rendering specific passages

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***A Guide to Oriental Classics*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2nd edition, 1975, p. 73.

to accord with references from the Vālmīki version. And, as a learning tool for students new to the Rāma-story, Sen's most serious flaw is his omission of a glossary of terms together with a guide to major characters.* But in this he was not alone; only two of the preceding renderings reviewed above provide glossaries. Sen's condensation originally appeared as a three-volume set in 1927; recently it has been attractively reprinted and bound as a single volume in India, where it is available in either hardcover or paperback format. In the early 1980s, it could be ordered in the U.S.A. for well under $15.00 (India retail: Rs. 80/-). For the money, it is the second-best choice currently available for college-level students, after the full translations already noted. Without a doubt, it is preferable to Buck's imaginative reconstruction of the story (14), which is only a bit shorter and considerably cheaper, and which is discussed more fully below.

An "adaption" (presumably a condensation of some kind) based on Shastri's three-volume prose translation is available in some libraries (12), but it is difficult to come by since it has long been out of print (224 pp., illustrated). Thanks to an Indian publishing house, however, the verse translation by R.T.H. Griffith, already noted above (6), is also available in a condensed version (13). Here the five

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*For those interested in classroom use of Sen's version, the compiler of the bibliography in hand has prepared a user's guide to the revised, second edition of Sen's *The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki*. Among other things, the guide contains an extensive glossary and index as well as other corrective data and instructional materials, including maps and charts. See *The Asian Story of Rama: Religion 108 Student Handbook* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Center for Instructional Development, 1983, 2nd edition).

volumes have been reduced to one, mainly by resorting to very small print. This abbreviated version lacks the "*Uttara-kāṇḍa*," an omission already faulted in the evaluation of Sarma's and Subramaniam's renditions of the epic. Griffith also omits some 13 chapters from the fifth *kāṇḍa*, and 28 chapters from the sixth. Even in this somewhat abbreviated form, it is unrealistic to suppose that contemporary undergraduates--Western or Indian--would suffer gladly the repetitious rhythm of the rhymed couplets.

Recastings

The high-risk nature of translating a lengthy classic poem, coupled with the sheer fascination that the epic tale evokes in those who consider it seriously and for a sustained period, have tempted many English-language writers simply to "retell" the basic story in their own words and in a way that will most deeply affect their readers. In this they are little different from the countless composers throughout South and Southeast Asia who have been so intrigued for so many centuries by the Rāma-theme that they have recast it in their vernaculars and in formats readily accessible to their countrymen. Here only nine or ten of the many, widely circulated recastings of the Rāma-story in English are noted--all but one of them in prose. The main concern in reviewing them here is to note to what extent each one conveys something of the Vālmīki original.

In recent years, one of the most visible versions of the Rāma-story in North American bookshops has been the late William Buck's *Ramayana: King Rama's Way* (14). This is, in fact, based only generally on as much of Vālmīki as was known to him through published English versions of the epic, enhanced somewhat by the lore layered onto the story by some of his unidentified informants. In this, the original structure of the *kāṇḍa*s is replaced by a divisional structure of the author's own invention.* Buck himself states in his preface, "My motive is that of the storyteller.... I have made my own changes to tell the story better.... I tried to make ... [it] interesting to read." While this did indeed result in an extremely readable prose version of the Rāma-story, it is more Buck's inventive recasting of the theme than it is Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa*, the result being considerable rearrangement# and the free introduction of episodes and characters which deviate from the Vālmīki original.

An even stronger warning must be issued against what purports to be "the central section of the Sanskrit epic" advanced by Maurice Collis (15). This easy-to-read paperback is in fact the story told from the perspective of Sītā, here made the central character. The author speaks thus of his main motive: " ... that while preserving the main outline of her story he [the author] should vivify it by passing it through his own imagination." That, indeed, Collis did. Not only has he given a totally one-sided view of the multidimensional original, but he has also stitched onto his handiwork embroidered episodes featuring Hanumān, Jaṭāyus and Saṁpati as well as a number of animal fables not found in Vālmīki. While Collis wrote prose well, and while his creation remains entertaining fare, it has little to recommend it as a source for serious study of the classic *Rāmāyaṇa* by the original author.

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*Even so, the original seven sections may be discerned within pages 3-59, 60-135, 138-193, 194-223, 223-270, 270-388 and 389-432 respectively of the hardcover edition, and within pages 3-48, 49-110, 113-157, 157-182, 182-220, 221-317 amd 318-352 of the paperback edition.

#Buck begins his narrative by introducing the *rakshasa*s and establishing the greatness of Rāvaṇa. In this, of course, he follows a pattern established in the "Rāmopakhyāna" section in the *Mahābhārata* and in such other early works as the Jaina *Paumacariya*, for which see (103) and (136), below. But his arrangement scarcely accords with Vālmīki's, whose version he purports to present.

To several generations of classroom readers, R.C. Dutt's English verse condensation of the *Rāmāyaṇa* (16) has been the medium through which they first learned the story of the exiled Prince. It has been, and still is, a useful learning tool. It is brief--it transmits only some of the major episodes and characters of the Vālmīki original--and it is written in iambic octameter couplets to approximate the elevated cadence of the epic's *śloka*-verses. It is listed in this section of the bibliography as a recasting, rather than above as a condensation, because in fact Dutt creates a narrative not merely quantitatively but, more importantly, qualitatively different from the text upon which it is based. By concentrating on the main narrative events, and omitting most descriptions, all didactic sections and the many minor stories, this in effect becomes an altogether different "*Rāmāyaṇa*." One effect of Dutt's radical selectivity, for example, is that the figure of Sītā emerges much more prominently here than in the original, while characters such as Lakshmaṇa, Rāvaṇa, Sugrīva, et al., recede to mere shadowy presences. Not only is the delicate balance of the narrative upset, but events of the "*Uttarakāṇḍa*" are minimized by relegating them to an appended epilogue. Despite the irony of all this, Dutt's version is still useful for students able to scan poetry (see remarks, pages 9*f*. and 15, respectively, in regard to verse renderings of the epic), and it is generally available at a modest cost in numerous reprints and anthologies.

Probably the most popular English presentation of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, at least in India, is the one by C. Rajagopalachari (17), India's first native son to serve after Independence as Governor General of the new nation. This widely disseminated version began many years back as a condensation of the Vālmīki epic into Tamil, a South Indian language, for South Indians unable to read either the Sanskrit original or any of its English renderings. He called it, in Tamil, *Cakravartittirumagan*. In Tamil Nadu, this retelling became immensely popular, even rivaling the original Vālmīki as well as the beloved regional version in classical Tamil, the *Irāmāvatāram* by Kamban (see [36] through [46], below). Throughout, "Rājajī" interspersed the episodes of Rāma and Sītā with moralizing homilies reflecting his own, widely respected views, and he freely interpolated numerous original illustrations and contemporary reflections. Rajagopalachari's Tamil version was as much his own as it was Vālmīki's. In 1951, when "Rājajī's" Tamil version was translated into English, it was also made available in a modestly priced paperback. The English-language version also became an instant success, not merely in the South but throughout India. In its first twenty years, Rajagopalachari's English recasting of the *Rāmāyaṇa* went through more than a dozen massive editions and, even though inflation has increased its price in recent years, its sale is still brisk. Students reading this version should know that they have in hand, then, a version of the ancient epic as it is currently known to many

Tamilians as well as English-reading Indians, for which reason alone it is worth reading. It contains a brief but helpful glossary.

The well-known South Indian novelist, R.K. Narayan, has in more recent years produced a version of the "*Rāmāyaṇa*" (37, 38) which the beginning student might mistake for a work inspired by the Vālmīki poem. It is not so. It is based, rather, on a regional variant of the epic. Narayan's publication, available at remarkably low cost in India and in a modestly priced paperback in North America, is noticed below, page 43.

Menon's crisp, prose reconstruction of the epic (18) cannot be recommended at all as an introduction to the original story. It is a parody of the original, based but loosely on some characters and events generally associated with the Rāma-theme. For the most part, in fact, Menon's story is sheer invention, with character reversals distasteful to anyone familiar with the tone of the original. While the author may be admired for his narrative skill and his enviable control of the language, it is not surprising that his fanciful, sardonic presentation has been roundly condemned in India.

Another "version" of the Rāma-story comes to mind here. Strictly speaking, it is not so much a retelling as it is a political tract. In it (19), the author, who was founder of the South Indian political party known as the Dravida Kazhagam, de-mythologizes the ancient story, declaring that it is nothing more or less than a fiction promulgated by the *brāhmaṇa*s of the North to justify their age-old subjugation of the South and its noble citizens. Accordingly, in his analysis Rāvaṇa becomes the true hero (p. 40*f*.), by contrast with whom Rāma "was wicked in thought and deed,... an embodiment of lies, treachery, artifice and cunningness, hard-heartedness, greediness, murder, drunkenness, flesh eating, arrowing at the innocent covertly, wicked associations, unmanliness and what not" (p. 5). By the same token, Sītā was vain, lied about her age, of questionable parentage, of loose morals, and pregnant by Rāvaṇa due to her own wiles. There is, according to this author, nothing divine about either of them, or about any with whom they associated. "The story aims solely at running down Tamils. The veneration of the story any longer in Tamil Nadu is injurious and ignominious to the self-respect of the community and of the country" (p. iv). The effect of this political pronouncement by the now-revered "E.V.R." [d. 1973], and its invective unleashed against the establishment, is in fact a new, politicized, propagandizing recreation of the story as timely and pertinent to a survey of variations on the Rāma-theme as any of the older, more formal reconstructions.

There are many other recastings and "transcreations" of the Rāma-story available in English today. Some of those are very brief. Some are quite substantial. In order to conclude this first section, only two will be dealt with here, both illustrated versions. The first is a lively and colorfully illustrated version by the Indian artist and movie director, Bapu (20). It features more than five dozen stylish, decorative pictures in shades of red, green, blue, yellow, peach, black and white. The format is inviting, and the text has been graded so that primary school children "all over the world may know of the great Epic from India" (p. 3). Yet the text is inconsistently laced with words that even some high school students will not know. The book contains no glossary or other aids to those who use it alone; outside of India, the volume was designed for sale to schools with a multi-media learning package that was, unfortunately, both bulky and costly, and which presumably addressed some of the users' learning needs. However attractive the drawings, however noble the educational goals, Bapu's final product--available in several languages, both Indian and European--must be faulted because its publishers have persisted in promoting it as Vālmīki's version. It is not; rather, it is a pleasant synthesis of folk-legends associated with the Rāma-story woven into one, short (and sweet) narration. Several telling examples will suffice to demonstrate how it departs from the Vālmīki story. According to Vālmīki, Sītā was not born in the house of Rāvaṇa (p. 12), nor did she push aside Śiva's heavy bow with her little finger (p. 13). Rāvaṇa was not, according to Vālmīki, one of the contestants at the tourney for Sītā's hand (p. 18). King Janaka gave away in marriage not only Sītā but also Ūrmilā, Māṇḍavī and Śrutikīrti to Rāma, Lakshmaṇa, Bharata and Śatrughna respectively (p. 20). Rāvaṇa was not warned at this point in the story by "his wise brother Vibhishana" to desist from his plan to abduct Sītā, but by Marīcha (p. 34). Rāvaṇa does not pick up the noble victim "along with a chunk of earth" (p. 39), but carries her off bodily. Sītā's jewelry did not reach a waiting Hanumān as a neat package tied "in a piece of [Sītā's] saree" (p. 41). Hanumān did not lengthen his tail to use as a throne from which to deliver an ultimatum to Rāvaṇa (p. 53) but, astonished at his splendor, instead spoke to Rāvaṇa courteously as an emissary. In Vālmīki, there is no episode with a squirrel, nor, according to him, was the causeway made with "floating rocks" (p. 58). Rāma and Lakshmaṇa were both immobilized by Indrajit's serpent-weapon, not Lakshmaṇa only, and both were revived by the touch of Garuḍa's wings, not by Hanumān.* Rāvaṇa was slain not because he was vulnerable in a particular spot, least of all his belly, nor because Vāyu deflected Rāma's aim (p. 67), but because Rāma used the invincible Brahmā-weapon. Nor does the story "end" when Rāma is crowned king (p. 71), for by cutting short the epic at that point only 85 percent of it is recounted: omitted are the marvelous and compelling events of the "*Uttara-kāṇḍa*," a concluding section of the epic integral to Vālmīki's vision. The truncating of the grand-scale original in this way, a fault it shares with (17), has already been noted in the reviews of numbers (9), (13), and (16), and will be touched upon further in regard to the regional versions by Tulsīdās, Kamban and others, below. What Bapu's version does achieve, however, is a popular account of the Rāma-theme suitable for use with young people.

The other illustrated version noted here is a project initiated by the present bibliographer in collaboration with Indian and American colleagues. Published in both India and North America (21, 22), it too is addressed to young readers. This version also features drawings to illustrate the story and, although they are not in color, and are simpler line-drawings, there are more of them. Finally, each of the more than six dozen pictures is captioned by a relevant *śloka*-verse from the Critical Edition of the Vālmīki text, which verse is presented first in Devanāgarī script, then transliterated into Roman letters, and finally translated into working English. While this production, too, has its faults, its virtue is that it sticks resolutely to the Vālmīki telling of the story. It is the only illustrated version available to present the events described in the "*Uttara-kāṇḍa*" (11 drawings). Finally, the American Classroom Edition of this collaborative project presents a readable recapitulation of the tale which preserves the seven-*kāṇḍa* structure of the original; this retelling runs to some thirty pages and includes many details omitted by other, shortened résumés. A useful glossary and pronunciation guide are also included in this same edition, items too seldom found in versions of the *Rāmāyaṇa* which find their way into classrooms.

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*Or, if it is Lakshmaṇa's solo fight depicted here, wherein he was rendered unconscious by a serpent-weapon and later revived by a mountain of herbs, his adversary was not Indrajit but Rāvaṇa himself (pp. 63, 64). In any case, this sequence is not an accurate rendition of the Vālmīki account.

Many other retellings of the Rāma-story are available. They range broadly from comic books published in several languages[*] to extracts of a devotional nature. The above sampling is limited to those publications which might most readily be considered by students and their instructors who are committed to a serious study of the Vālmīki version of the text.

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[*] In India, contact Amar Chitra Katha series, India Bookhouse Education Trust, 29 Wodehouse Road, Bombay 400 039; in the U.S.A., contact Gulmohr Books, P.O. Box 1414, Los Altos, CA 94022.

VARIATIONS ON THE THEME

The Valmiki *Rāmāyaṇa* says of itself that it is "... the greatest reservoir from which the poets draw ..." [*paraṁ kavīnām ādhāram*--"*Bāla-kāṇḍa*" IV:26 =Baroda Edition I.4.20b]. This statement surely proved to be an accurate prophecy during the succeeding centuries. The original "*Ādikāvya*" (see page 75 for this term) did indeed provide the model for many subsequent regional adaptations, as well as for plays, didactic works, *kāvya*-poems and *mahākāvya*-epics.

In the process of imitation there were, inevitably, changes wrought in the story. The variants seem to have reflected one or more of the following trends:

a. In many cases, the retelling altered the character of one or more of the figures prominent in the story; e.g., Rāma was presented unambiguously as an epiphany of Lord Vishṇu, and Sītā was declared his eternal Consort; or, Rāvaṇa was considerably ennobled and hence invested with tragic potentials; or, Kaikeyī was made less guilty of blame; and so on.

b. Structural details within the story were often changed; e.g., Rāvaṇa is made to appear earlier in the tale, perhaps as one of the contestants at Sītā's bridal tournament and even, in some cases, as her father; or, the youthful Rāma and Sītā see one another at some point prior to the contest for her hand, thus introducing the element of romantic "love at first sight"; or, minor details emphasizing Sītā's chastity are introduced, such that, even though she is captured by Rāvaṇa, she is never actually touched by his hands, or it is so arranged that only an "apparition" of Sītā is abducted; etc.

c. A common invention was to focus only on certain elements of the story; or to amplify on the polity of Rāma's long reign; or to elaborate on the long-standing enmity between the houses of Rāma and Rāvaṇa; or to cut short the narrative before the events of the "*Uttara-kāṇḍa*"; or, to dilate upon the supernatural, deceitful magic of the *rakshasa*s as tricksters; and so on.

d. Yet another practice was to take only one episode or sequence of events within the story and to retell that section, embellishing it with elaborate details and subtle nuances; or to recapitulate the entire epic in brief but memorable fashion.

Although regionally popular versions of the *Rāmāyaṇa* in vernacular languages were by no means the earliest versions of Rāma's story, as is demonstrated in subsequents sections of this guide, they are perhaps the most important for beginning students to take note of at the outset. For, to many Indians of a particular geographical or linguistic region, the particular Rāma-story which circulates in their local dialect is "the" *Rāmāyaṇa*--they know no other. Students new to *Rāmāyaṇa* studies should not confuse Vālmīki's original epic poem [*ādikāvya*] with any one or more of the regional, or "*deśī*," variants. Because of the influence of the many regional variants of the story upon the masses, these vehicles by which the story was most widely disseminated and successfully perpetuated locally countless times over are reviewed first, even though doing so requires skipping almost a millennium of thematic developments since Vālmīki's creation. Then, in succeeding sections, other translated works are reviewed which, both earlier and later, draw upon the Rāma-story.

Popular Regional Versions

(23) Hill, W.D.P. (tr.) *The Holy Lake of the Acts of Rama*. Calcutta: Oxford University Press, 1971, 2nd printing (orig., 1952).

(24) Growse, F.S. (tr.) *The Ramayana of Tulsi Das* (revised by R.C. Prasad). Banaras: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978 (orig., 1877-1881; many subsequent editions).

(25) Bahadur, S.P. (tr.) *Complete Works of Goswami Tulsidas*. Varanasi: Prachya Prakashan, 1978-1980. 6 volumes.

(26) Bahadur, S.P. (tr.) *The Ramayana of Goswami Tulsidas*. Bombay: Jaico Publishing House, 1972.

(27) Tulsidas, *Sri Ramacharitamanasa*. Gorakhpur: Gita Press, 1976, 3rd edition (orig., 1968). [Hindi text with translation in English prose, 864 pp.]

(28) Macfie, J.M. (tr.) *The Ramayana of Tulsidas; or the Bible of Northern India*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1930.

(29) Atkins, A.G. (tr.) *The Ramayana of Tulsidas*. Calcutta: Birla Academy of Art and Culture, 1966. 2 volumes. (orig., New Delhi: The Hindustan Times, 1954.)

(30) Ahluwalia, B.K. (ed.) *The Ramayana: Tulsidas Retold*. Delhi: Orient Longmans, 1974.

(31) Shastri, Hari Prasad (ed.) *Book of Ram: The Bible of India.* London: Luzac & Co., 1935.

(32) Allchin, F.R. (tr.) *The Petition to Ram.* London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1966.

(33) Allchin, F.R. (tr.) *Kavitāvalī.* London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1964.

(34) Kapur, B.L. (tr.) *Hanumān Chālīsā: The Descent of Grace.* New Delhi: Trimurti Publications, 1974.

(35) Bahadur, K.P. (tr.) *Selections from Rāmacandrikā of Keśavadāsa.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1976.

(36) Mudaliyar, V.S. (ed., tr.) *Kamba Ramayana.* Madras: Palaniappa Brothers, 1970.

(37) Narayan, R.K. *The Ramayana: A Shortened Version of the Indian Epic.* Mysore: Indian Thought Publications, 1973.

(38) Narayan, R.K. *The Ramayana (Suggested by the Tamil Version of Kamban).* New York: Penguin Books, 1977 (orig., New York: Viking, 1972).

(39) Rajagopalachari, C. (tr.) *The Ramayana as Told by Kamban: Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa.* London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1961.

(40) Srinivasa Raghava, A. (ed., tr.) *Leaves from Kamban.* Madras: Kambar Kazhagam, 1955. 28 pp.

(41) Ponniah, S.M. (tr.) *Sri Paduka: The Exile of the Prince of Ayodhya.* Athens: Ohio University Center for International Studies, Southeast Asia Series No. 7, 1969.

(42) Maharajan, S. *Kamban.* New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi Makers of Indian Literature Series, 1972.

(43) Aiyar, V.V.S. *Kamba Ramayana: A Study.* Bombay: Bharatiyq Vidya Bhavan (Bhavan's Book University, 129), 1970, 2nd edition.

(44) Shankar Raju Naidu, S. *A Comparative Study of Kamba Ramayana and Tulsi Ramayana.* Madras: University of Madras, 1971.

(45) Sharma, C.R. *The Ramayana in Telugu and Tamil.* Madras: Lakshminarayana Granthamala, 1973.

(46) Singaravelu, S. "A Comparative Study of the Sanskrit, Tamil, Thai, and Malay Versions of the Story of Rāma with special reference to the Process of Acculturation in the Southeast Asia Version." *The Journal of the Siam Society* LVI (1968):137-185.

(47) Mazumdar, Shudha (tr.) *Ramayana.* Bombay: Orient Longmans, 1974 (orig., Calcutta: 1958).

(48) Dineshchandra Sen, R.S. *The Bengali Ramayanas.* Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1920.

(49) Grierson, G.A. (tr.) *The Kāshmīrī Rāmāyaṇa.* Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal (Bibliotheca Indica Series, vol. 253), 1930.

(50) Thomas, F.W. "A Rāmāyana Story in Tibetan from Chinese Turkestan." *Indian Studies in Honor of Charles Rockwell Lanman.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1929. pp. 193-212.

(51) Bailey, H.W. "The Rāma Story in Khotanese." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 59 (1939): 470-468. [cf. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London*, v. 10.]

(52) Godakumbura, C.E. "The Ramayana: A Version of Rama's Story from Ceylon." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, London*, 1946:14-22.
[cf. 125-131.]

Most of the vernacular versions of the Rāma-story appeared late in the so-called medieval period of India's history, between the 12th and the late 16th/early 17th centuries. What prompted the propagation of the story into the local languages at that time was the result of a complex set of circumstances. Suffice here to say that the popularization of the story coincides with the emergence of the Rāma-cult in the wake of the *bhakti*-movements then sweeping the subcontinent. It is possible to name only some of the better-known regional retellings as witness to this remarkably widespread phenomenon. In northern, Hindi-speaking areas, Tulsīdās' 16th century *Rāmacaritamānasa* is still considered the epitome of the epic. Yet in southern Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, respectively, the multitudes honor Kamban's (pre-?) 12th century *Irāmāvatāram* in Tamil and the (pre-?) 16th century *Molla Rāmāyaṇa* in Telugu (with the late 13th century *Raṅganātha Rāmāyaṇa*, also in Telugu, running a close second). In Bengal, the late

14th century Kṛittivāsa's *Rāmāyaṇa* remains the popular version of the story. Elsewhere, in Gujarat, Premānanda's 17th century and Girdhāradāsa's 19th century versions in Gujarati hold sway, while in the present-day state of Karnataka the so-called *Torave Rāmāyaṇa*, composed in the late 16th century by Narahari (alias Kumāra Vālmīki, "the young Vālmīki"), is the most popular Kannada-language version.* Malayalam speakers of Kerala honor the *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa*, adapted late in the 16th century by Ezhuttaccan from a Sanskrit model (see [128], below), and Marathi speakers of Maharashtra State are chiefly familiar with Śrīdhara's early 18th century *Rāmavijaya*. By the same token, Oriya speakers of Orissa State memorize the *Jaganmohana Rāmāyaṇa* (sometimes called the *Daṇḍi Rāmāyaṇa*) by the late 16th century poet Balarāma Dāsa, while the text of the *Vicitra Rāmāyaṇa* is popular there in the performing arts. Other vernacular variants are circulated as far north as Kashmir, Tibet and Khotan, and as far south as Sri Lanka.

Not all of these popular regional versions are available in English translations. Those which have been translated or otherwise made available in the form of lengthy descriptions or résumés are noted more fully in the following paragraphs. The order in which the titles are presented is roughly the order

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*See also the discussion later in this bibliography, page 113*f*., of the so-called *Pampa Rāmāyaṇa*, a Jain version in Kannada, likewise popular.

#This bibliographical survey is intended to cover only Indian variants of the Rāma-theme. For information regarding variants in South, Southeast and East Asia, see (155), below, especially its bibliography, pages 169-182.

in which students new to the Rāma-theme are likely to encounter them.

Tulsīdās' *Rāmacaritamānasa* (Hindi)

This is undisputedly the most widely distributed regional version of the Rāma-story. Written during the late 1570s/early 1580s in Awadhi, a well-established dialect of the Hindi language, this masterpiece is often referred to by Western observers as "the Bible of Northern India." Hindi, now the language of more than 160 million people, is used by more than 30 percent of all Indians in business and the professions, in education and the media; it is the official language of the Government of India. Consequently, any work in Hindi has a large number of potential clients, especially in broad areas of North India; the more so when the mode of expression in Hindi (like Tulsīdās' transformation of the epic) is so immediate in its impact, so evocative in its moods, so eloquent in its testimony. Indeed, for many Hindi-speaking millions, the mere reading or hearing of the *Rāmacaritamānasa* by Tulsīdās [var., Tulasīdāsa] (1532-1623) is itself an experience of religious magnitude. In this it is unusual, standing out from among nearly all the other rehearsals of the Rāma-story. It is staged annually as a massive pageant, as a part of the festivities known as Rām Līlā (see [151], below). Because of its power, no less than its prestige and popularity, it is not surprising that this Hindi version of the Rāma-story has been translated into many other Indian languages. Its influence thus reaches far beyond the Hindi-speaking areas of the North, where it was nurtured, to regions throughout the subcontinent.

As for English treatments of Tulsīdās' Hindi classic, there are too many to note all of them here. Attention is drawn to those few translations and condensations which are most likely to be found in Indian and American school libraries. For many years, the modern standard for a prose translation of Tulsīdās' masterpiece had been seen in Hill (23); but unfortunately, Oxford University Press has allowed that version to go out of print, and as of this writing has no plans to reprint that useful volume. In its place, students may turn with confidence to a revised edition of Growse (24); it has received good marks from several reviewers, this present edition standing at the end of a long line of precursors. One might also use S.P. Bahadur's remarkably less graceful, mixed prose-and-verse rendering found in the fourth volume of his six-volume translation of Tulsīdās' complete works (25), which version had earlier been made available as a separate publication (26). For those wishing access to the Hindi text along with its literal translation into English, the Gita Press edition (27) will be useful. Many libraries still have Macfie (28), which is more tolerable than any other, older prose translation. For a verse rendering, the most admirable is a two-volume edition by Atkins, handsomely produced in India (29). Of the several prose condensations or retellings of Tulsīdās currently on the market or in libraries, two deserve notice. The more simply told résumé, suitable both for high school students and for quick review by college students, is Ahluwalia (30). More flowery in its language is the scarce, but nonetheless useful, abstract by Shastri (31).

Students turning for the first time to Tulsīdās' *Rāmacaritamānasa* should be aware that it is far from a simple replication in Hindi of Vālmīki's Sanskrit original. Although both nominally and formally it preserves the seven *kāṇḍa*-sections of the earlier model (albeit with slight rearrangement of the divisional contents), it is clear that the later author transformed the earlier epic into his own hymn to the Divine Rāma. In this, it appears that Tulsīdās also knew and was influenced by other renditions of the Rāma-story. Indeed, it can be demonstrated that much derives from other sources.* Yet, clearly, the *Rāmacaritamānasa* was Tulsīdās' own synthesis, wondrously brought together by the impulses of his own undeniable genius and fervent devotion. The most important characteristic of Tulsīdās' work is that throughout it, Rāma is depicted as none other than Divinity Incarnate, God merely playing the part of a mortal man. Given this premise, many details of the traditional story had to be altered to accord with the author's docetistic views. Even so (as with Vālmīki so with Tulsīdās), there remain several palpable ambiguities to pervade the work. At one level, the alert reader is never sure whether the Rām of Tulsīdās' devotion is the Divine Lord Vishṇu's *avatāra* consonant with Viśishṭādvaita theology, or the Absolute *brahman* of Advaita monism--a paradox which piques as much as it puzzles the purist. At another level, while Tulsīdās' world is still one in which respect for guru/father/mother/elders/rulers/*brāhmaṇa*s, etc., prevails, and while it is still a system controlled by fate/destiny, and one in which

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*Cf. the work in French done in this regard by Charlotte Vaudeville, *Étude sur les Sources et la Composition du Rāmāyaṇa de Tulsī-Dās* (Paris: Adrien Maisonneuve, 1955).

curses and boons are irrevocable, nonetheless mysteriously, illogically, it is also a world over which arches grace and the promise of release from *saṁsāra* solely by devotion to the Supreme Lord. Indeed, it is devotion to Rām that is a hallmark of Tulsīdās' rendering of the story; even the mere utterance of the Holy Name "Rām" is sufficient to save the sinner.*

In the process of effecting his transformation of the ancient epic, Tulsīdās introduced many other changes as well. Gone are the conventions of *kāvya*, the artificial rhetoric and elaborate poetic extensions; these are replaced by an endless approximation, through similes and metaphors, to suggest the grandeur of God's work among men. Rām's journey itself becomes a metaphor of strange, stirring strength. Most of the other imagery employed draws upon habits and objects well known to Indian readers --various local fauna are described in minute detail along with lillies, lotuses, jack-fruits, etc.-- giving the poetics of the work more immediacy, intentionally less universality, than Vālmīki's original. Throughout, however, the author assumes that the reader is familiar with the traditional story. For, after all, Tulsīdās was working with materials so well known that he could afford to compress, even to omit, a number of components. Bharat's absence from the kingdom is never explained; Kaikeyī's two boons are mentioned but not detailed; Sītā's lengthy request to accompany Rām to the forest is not recorded (is she too young?), but only her satisfaction in being permitted to accompany him is noted.

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*"*Bāla-kānda*" C28, C119; "*Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa*" C194, C217, C311,... etc.

Similarly, the ascetic's curse on Daśarath is passed over quickly, with no elaboration; the dispatch of Virādh is taken care of in a line or two; and Śarabhaṅga becomes merely an encounter, not (as in Vālmīki) a vital link in a chain of meetings leading inevitably to Agastya and beyond. In the account of the first meeting with Jaṭāyu, the "King of the Vultures" is not even mentioned by name; Sītā's "wounding words" to Lakshman, uttered after the deer is killed, are omitted; and the episode with Kabandh is given short shrift. While Sugrīv sends out parties, the expedition to the South is the only one described, and in little detail at that; though Saṁpati's wings evidently grow back, nothing is said explicitly about them; Hanumān's ocean crossing is barely described, and his recapitulation of the tale, in order to introduce himself to Sītā in the Aśoka Grove, is drastically shortened; etc. Yet, even while such compressions and omissions do exist, there are also extensions of existing story elements, especially when those serve to emphasize some teaching dear to the hearts of Tulsīdās' readers. For example, Lakshman's farewell to his mother, Sumitrā; Angad's interview as an envoy to Rāvan before the battle begins; and numerous places in the "*Uttara-kāṇḍa*" containing teachings about saints, sinners, faith, devotion and so on are all elaborately developed.

Most of the changes can be traced, ultimately, to the ramifications of Tulsīdās' theological perspective. Given Rām's divine status it is no surprise that Sītā is clearly, unambiguously identified as an incarnation of Śrī. Consequently there is no need for any other mystery about her, she is "born" of known, earthly parents. Her identity with the "Furrow" is muted. In addition, Rām and Sītā see one another prior to their marriage and, recognizing one another's eternal identities, fall in love at first sight; Mantharā is inspired by the gods (viz., Sarasvatī), not by inherent evil, to set in motion the "plot" because all creation is anxious for Rām to enter the forest and to fulfill his divine task; the motivations for Bhāradvāj's "entertainments" are subtly different; Janak and his court come to see Rām in the forest at the same time as Bharat, making this a grand, courtly reception; Anasūyā merely gives wifely advice to Sītā, since there is no longer any need for protective amulets and mystery about the great goddess; and it is not the "real" Sītā who is abducted by Rāvan, but merely an illusory being (see [23], pp. 311, 422); Rāvan's final sortie engages nearly the entire cast of characters until Rām appears in order to deliver the final coup de grâce; etc. Finally, the ending itself is different: since Sītā is not banished, the birth of the twins Lava and Kuśa is only mentioned as a passing episode during the long sway of Rām's rule.

Of course, not all the innovations originated with Tulsīdās. That is where his dependence on other sources enters the picture,* though this is not the place to detail those. Whatever else may be said of Tulsīdās' rendering of the Rāma-story, it is undeniably set in a different time and place from Vālmīki's strange and wonderful landscape. It is a never-never land, an ecosphere in which gods and

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*Most notably on the late 15th/early 16th century *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa* (see [125] below), on the earlier dramas *Hanumān-nāṭaka* and *Prasanna-rāghava* (see [81] and [82], below, respectively), and on the 14th century *Bhuśuṇḍi Rāmāyaṇa* ([124], below, and [127], pp. 221*ff.*)

mortals coexist in a comfortable consciousness of one another's presence. In addition, the whole narrative is interlaced with a plenum of folk- and devotional lore, and this last is but one of many clues to its sustained popularity among the masses. It provides, for example, many "whats, whys and whens": what to do upon arriving at a pilgrimage place such as Prayāg; why it is proper to repeat Rām's name after sneezing; when it is important to undertake *japa* of Holy Names, etc.

Tulsīdās lived to be 91 and the *Rāmacaritamānasa*, though his masterpiece, was not his only work on the Rāma-theme. Thanks to S.P. Bahadur's recently completed translation into English of Tulsīdās' complete works, the interested reader may sample all of these. Of most immediate interest, perhaps, is a song of 279 poems, most of which express in deeply devotional exclamations of faith Tulsīdās' commitment to Rām. This work is known as the *Vinaya Patrikā* (25 [II:3-189]; also 32). Tulsīdās' *Kavitāvalī* (25 [V:1-97]; also 33), a work of his old age, is also important for understanding his religious vision. The rapture of the poet's ecstatic love for Rām is reflected in the collection of 330 poems called *Gītāvalī* (25 [III:39-248]), said to have been composed in Ayodhyā after Tulsīdās' long sojourn in Chitrakuṭā. Of the minor works attributed to Tulsīdās (25 [VI passim]), one in particular demands attention here. There is some controversy over the authorship of *Hanumān Chālīsā* (25 [VI:165-168]; 34 [73-103]), which consists of only 40 verses. It is worth mentioning here because it dilates on the widely held folk belief that Hanumān still lives somewhere in hiding; as such, it represents but one of the many utterances of praise, prayer, or petition addressed to the intercessory monkey-figure, collections of which Rāma-related materials are not otherwise noted in this bibliographical survey.*

Before moving on to versions of the Rāma-theme from other linguistic regions, it is important to note another Hindi author who, like Tulsīdās, was a Rāma devotee and who has often been overlooked due to Tulsīdās' blinding aura. He is Keśava (var., Keśavadāsa), a younger contemporary of Tulsīdās but one who, because of the latter's longevity, was outlived by the master poet, further casting him into relative obscurity. Yet Keśava (1556-1618), a *brāhmaṇa* of considerable sophistication and experience, was a poet of refinement and sensitivity. He wrote several works, but his not inconsiderable reputation rests on a series of loosely connected poems in Hindi based on incidents from the Rāma-story. Although he was profoundly influenced by Tulsīdās, his own poem, never to achieve the status accorded Tulsīdās' chef-d'oeuvre, was quite different from it. Such incidents as he borrowed from the story are used primarily as vehicles to promote his own ideas concerning various matters of interest to him--ideas about kingship, government and statecraft; about amorous women, infatuation and courtly love; about beauty, vigor and old age; about nature, the seasons and places. Yet the touch of the poet sparked his verses with imaginative lustre, and to read parts of the *Rāmacandrikā* even in translation (35) is to glimpse an enchanting world of uncommon poetic power and strikingly original embellishments. Most memorable, perhaps, are the verses containing the delightfully anachronistic description of Rāma and his princely friends playing polo!

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*See, however, page 122 and (148), below.

Kamban's *Irāmāvatāram* (Tamil)

Tamil is the language of some 37 million speakers, mainly in the South Indian linguistic state of Tamil Nadu. This is a scant 7 percent of India's total population, so all that is said in the following paragraphs must be placed in the context of the minority language that Tamil is. Yet, Tamil presents us with a literary heritage both rich and ancient and, within Tamil literature, there are few works more highly prized and justly praised than Kamban's [var., Kāmpar's] epic *Irāmāvatāram* ("The Descent of Rāma"). For many South Indians, it is "the" *Rāmāyaṇa*--though that encomium is, to be sure, prompted more by literary considerations than, as in the case of the Hindi *Rāmacaritamānasa* by Tulsīdās, by faith in its intrinsic, salvific power.

Kamban's* poem here under consideration is a magnificent achievement. About twice the length of Homer's *Iliad*, it contains six divisions (cf. Vālmīki's seven *kāṇḍa*-divisions) which add up to a total of 10,569 stanzas of four lines each. While clearly patterned after the Vālmīki original, it also bears close affinities to elements found in the (later) *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa* (125). But it is far more than a mere synthesis of its sources and, except for certain exemplary *kāvya* pieces in Sanskrit, the Tamil masterpiece is unparalleled in its use of the resources of language to produce dictive effects and to create evocative sound symbolisms. It is said that Kamban, whose title *Kavicakravarti* means "Emperor of Poets," perfected the *vṛitta*-meter in which he wrote. He is loved not only for his beautiful imagery and dignified style but also for his devotion to his subject.

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*His date is debated; most probably he is to be assigned either to the late 10th or early 12th century.

In Kamban's *Irāmāvatāram* (also known as *Rāmāvatāra* or simply as the *Kamban Rāmāyaṇa*), Rāma is unambiguously a divine being. Gone is the mystery and ambiguity of Vālmīki's vision; here the dramatis personae and the situations in which they find themselves are characterized by nobility of sentiment, restraint in mood, and delicacy of utterance. Kamban is separated from Vālmīki not merely by many centuries but also by an inventory of tastes and conventions drawn from a storehouse of Dravidian provision. His articulation of Rāma's divine personality, of Sītā's chastity, of Rāvaṇa's heroism, as well as his delineation of such characters as Ahalyā, Vāli, Kumbhakarṇa and Indrajit reflect Tamil paradigms, follow Tamil literary traditions. Just as Vālmīki included certain routine descriptions which later became hallmarks of the Sanskritic *kāvya*-style, so Kamban's descriptions of shores, mountains, forests, deserts and habitations are structured by formal considerations deriving from a different, Tamilian heritage.

In keeping with his notion of Rāma's divinity, Kamban ends his story with Rāma's triumphant return to Ayodhyā after vanquishing Rāvaṇa. There is no second fire ordeal for Sītā, no banishment for her as in Vālmīki's version. Kamban does not draw at all upon the narrative developments of the "*Uttarakāṇḍa*"--nothing must diminish the stature of the evil-quélling God incarnate. In fact, Kamban adds fresh material (e.g., the story of Iraṇiyaṉ, or Hiraṅyakaśipu, in Book VI) in order to reinforce the image of Vishṇu as destroyer of demons.

The student unfamiliar with the literary conventions that restrain yet enliven Kamban's telḷing of the Rāma-epic will find at least three matters disengaging in a first reading. One is the impact of Sītā's stainless character; to a Western reader she appears to have lost whatever might have been compelling about her in the Vālmīki version: in Kamban she is so much the model of virtue and fidelity that, at least by contrast, she becomes uninteresting. Another irksome matter will be the redundant and clichéd imagery to which the poet apparently resorts without hesitation, as well as the often far-fetched poetic conceits in which he so extensively indulges himself. Also perplexing is Kamban's evidently overworked conceit of investing inanimate weapons with supernatural powers, to the extent that those *astra*s regularly battle one another in mid-air, and return promptly to their dispatchers whenever victorious. Especially in the final, war section the attention given to the dispatch of these *astra*-weapons and their prowess in combat becomes excessive. Against these objections it must be argued, simply, that "something gets lost in the translation" when Kamban's classic is transposed into a foreign language and an alien culture; it must be maintained that these are some of the very conventions by which, mirabile dictu, those familiar with Tamil literature measure Kamban's greatness.

Although Kamban's *Rāmāyaṇa* has been translated into other South Indian languages, notably Malayalam (for which reason it is also popular in such places as Kerala State), no complete translation into English has yet been undertaken. Best access to it for readers of English can be gained through a severely edited version, executed and translated by

V.S. Mudaliyar (36). It preserves the overall structure of Kamban's poem, and sympathetically samples sections throughout the work so that the narrative flow of the original model is sustained.

R.K. Narayan's version (37, 38) is not so easily endorsed. In his own introduction, the South Indian novelist quite disarmingly states that his retelling "is by no means a translation nor a scholarly study, but may be called a resultant literary product out of the impact of Kamban on my mind as a writer." As a narrative writer Narayan has taken "several contiguous sections of Kamban's work" and woven them into a tale, interpolating his own analyses of Kamban's motives or procedure at several points (e.g., pp. 3, 31, 33*f*., 97, 98, 113, 170*f*.), presumably to assist the flow of the story. Gone, however, is the format of Kamban's elaborately structured poem and, with it, anything even remotely resembling Kamban's literary style. In his epilogue, Narayan tries, for reasons not made explicit, to link up his recital with the Vālmīki version of the story--another jarring note! All in all, then, Narayan's is a personalized recapitulation of a 10th or 12th century epic by a 20th century storyteller. On its own, it has much to recommend it as a "fresh" version of the ever-beloved Rāma-story; but it relates only accidentally to either Kamban or Vālmīki.

Small bits and pieces of Kamban's *Rāmāyaṇa* have from time to time been given over into English, the most satisfactory among the partial translations being that by C. Rajagopalachari (39), who unfortunately presents only part of the "*Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa*" section. The Kamban Society of Madras has promulgated a slim volume (40), but its 28-page length is far too abbreviated for serious uses. Ponniah's publication (41), part of Kamban's creation reconstituted as a play, can in no wise be recommended for a critical sampling of the Tamil poet. It is reported that Professor George L. Hart III of the University of California at Berkeley, in collaboration with H. Heifetz, is at work on a translation of the entirety of Kamban's "*Forest Book*"; it is likely to be some years before that is ready to be put in the hands of readers.

A few studies of Kamban give generous discussion of his masterpiece, and may usefully supplement the recommended reading by Mudaliyar. Two examples will suffice: Maharajan's biography (42), which is brief but pointed, and V.V.S. Aiyar's lectures (43), which remain a classic study of the poet and his poem. Several other studies compare and contrast the Kamban *Rāmāyaṇa* with other versions--Vālmīki's, Raṅganātha's, Tulsīdās'--and presume but little sophistication on the part of the reader. These can, therefore, make stimulating reading for the interested student. S. Shankara Raju Naidu's dissertation (44) expands upon some of the observations made in this, and in the preceding section, of the present bibliographic essay.

C.R. Sharma's study (45), based in part on Kamban, brings into focus with it another, popular (and consequently important) version of the *Rāmāyaṇa* written in Telugu--another language of South India, claiming some 45 million speakers, or roughly 8 percent of all Indians, concentrated in but not confined to the geographical area known as Andhra Pradesh. It is called the *Raṅganātha Rāmāyaṇa*, and although attributed to a "Raṅganātha," it seems in the main to have been the work of one Buddhā Reḍḍi, albeit completed by his two sons after his death. Most probably this work belongs to the late 13th century, thus making this poetic rendering in 34,580 lines one of the first 100 or more versifications of the theme in Andhra, where Rāma has for so long been reputed to be the favorite deity. That "work of great simplicity and sweetness ... full of apt similes" also forms the basis for regional puppet plays and minstrel performances as well as for other art forms. A translation of "Raṅganātha's" work into English was, in the early 1980s, reported to be near completion in Denmark, fruits of a collaboration between Niels R. Sorensen and A.R. Acharya (of Ahmedabad). Finally, S. Singaravelu's long essay (46) helps to place the South Indian versions of the *Rāmāyaṇa* within a meaningful context of cultural diffusion as adaptations of Vālmīki's ancient epic found expression beyond the subcontinent in reaches of Greater India.

Kṛittivāsa's *Rāmāyaṇa* (Bengali)

Bengali is a language known to about the same number of native speakers as Telugu (some 48 million, or about 8 percent of India's population, not to mention the 90 million Bengali-speakers in what is now called Bangladesh). Throughout the centuries, Bengalis have made proud, outspoken claims for the not inconsiderable heritage of their language. Indeed, there is a palpable cultural presence which pervades that corner of northeastern India where the Bengali language and the Bengali mind predominate. To a certain extent that cultural identity has to do with a strong sense of place, that is, with an attachment both mystical and chauvinistic to the land they sense as their own, and with a religious imagination capable of perceiving the divine power in terms compatible with a feminine theology. The regional versions of the Rāma-story which circulate there reflect these, and other, features.

The regional version of the *Rāmāyaṇa* perhaps best known in Bengal is that by the late-14th century poet Kṛittibās Ojhā (better known outside Bengali-speaking regions as Kṛittivāsa). It is a work in six major sections plus a prologue and epilogue. The first section, "*Ayodhyā*," is an abridgement of the events of Rāma's birth, his education, marriage and exile (matters which Vālmīki distributed over two *kāṇḍa*s); the subsequent sections follow the names, though only in general terms the plot, of the original model. Battle scenes occupy about two-fifths of the piece. But what is most interesting about Kṛittivāsa's retelling of the Rāma-story are the local legends and modifications he introduces to the traditional narrative. For example, at one point the author describes Rāma engaging in Caṇḍīpūjā, and at another, describes one of Rāvaṇa's sons, Mahīrāvaṇa, worshipping according to local rules for tantric rites. Throughout Kṛittivāsa's work, sometimes called the *Bāṅglā Rāmāyaṇa*, a number of alterations lend it a special charm--no less so because of the author's repeated use of settings and locales familiar to Bengalis.

Kṛittivāsa also made a stunning change in his ending of the story. There Śatrughna is made to enter Vālmīki's hermitage because he is, at Rāma's command, following the horse set wandering as part of an elaborate horse-sacrifice undertaken by Rāma. Sītā, of course, is living at the hermitage although she is not much in evidence. Her twin sons, Lava and Kuśa, are more prominent; by this point in the story they are youthful warriors blessed with the possession of invincible weapons furnished by the super-sage Vālmīki. Lava and Kuśa kill Śatrughna forthwith.

In due time Lakshmaṇa and Bharata, seeking to avenge Śatrughna's death, are also slain by the two boys, all without Sītā's knowledge. Rāma, who comes with his armies, challenges the two unknown youths. In the ensuing battle, the two boys are protected not only by Vālmīki's magic weapons but also by the power of a truth-vow made by their mother on their behalf. In the pitched battle between Rāma's forces and the twins, all from Ayodhyā are killed; even Hanumān and Jāmbavān, immortals who thus cannot die, are rendered unconscious. After seventeen days of intense, close combat with the boys, Rāma himself is slain! The lads take his jewels and clothes as trophies and, when Sītā sees these, all involved realize what dire events have transpired.

Sītā and her two (now remorseful) sons prepare to perform *satī* by constructing fire-pits for themselves. They are, however, dissuaded from this course of action by Vālmīki, who brings everyone back to life in a marvelous resurrection scene. Rāma, recovered, returns to Ayodhyā still unaware of the youths' identities. To culminate the interrupted horse-sacrifice, Ayodhyā prepares for a great celebration.* To this festive scene, Vālmīki dispatches Lava and Kuśa to sing the "Rāmāyaṇa." After a month of listening daily to the twins sing, Rāma is finally moved to ask them who they are. Reconciliation follows recognition, and Sītā is called for. But she learns it is only so that she may stand trial again. At this point her mother, Vasumatī ("Earth"), rises up and gathers Sītā to her bosom, crying out to

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*Up to this point, the alterations bear provocative parallels to the *Kāśmīrī Rāmāyaṇa* (49; see pages xliv-xlviii), described below on page 50*f*.

Rāma that she is rescuing her child. Together, Sītā and Vasumatī descend into the earth.

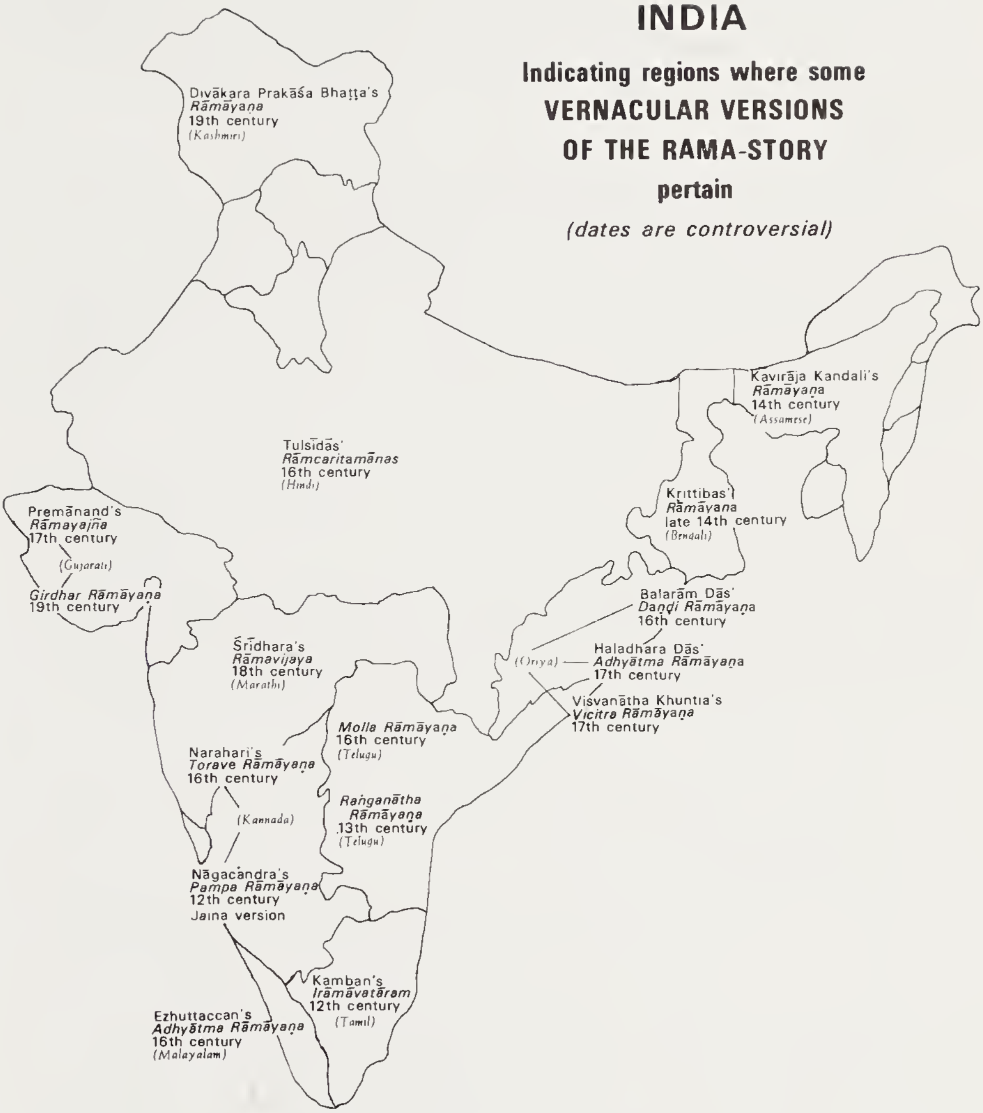
In the epilogue, Rāma is described as inconsolable. He throws his powerful bow against the earth, and Vasumatī makes another appearance, saying, "It is not right for you to be enraged with me ..." (see [47], p. 525). She orders him to listen to the "Rāmāyaṇa" daily and Rāma does so for many years. When in due time Death comes for him, Rāma receives him gratefully and goes to his ascension site at the River Sarayū, accompanied by all who have remained close to him. The story by Kṛittivāsa ends as Heaven rejoices to receive the thousands who accompany Rāma (=Vishṇu) back to his celestial home. There, along with his lovely consort Lakshmī, he once more occupies his lotus throne.

A non-scholarly, but useful, translation of Kṛittivāsa's Bengali *Rāmāyaṇa* is available (47). Unfortunately several other Bengali retellings of the story are not available in full translations, although an interested student may turn to Dineshchandra Sen's lectures *The Bengali Ramayanas* (48) for abbreviated descriptions of their contents. One of those which is particularly arresting is the *Mahī Rāvaṇer Pālā* (ibid., pp. 252-283), essentially a folk-telling of a popular Bengali legend, using stock characters and events of the Rāma-story but entirely different from it in spirit and intention. The most notable element of it is the *Śākta* influence which transforms Sītā into an avenging power who finally kills Rāvaṇa herself (as also seen in the *Adbhuta Rāmāyaṇa*, [129], below).

INDIA

Indicating regions where some
VERNACULAR VERSIONS
OF THE RAMA-STORY
pertain

(dates are controversial)


Divākara Prakāśa Bhaṭṭa's *Rāmāyaṇa* 19th century *(Kashmiri)*
Tulsīdās' *Rāmcaritamānas* 16th century *(Hindi)*
Kavirāja Kandali's *Rāmāyaṇa* 14th century *(Assamese)*
Krittibas' *Rāmāyana* late 14th century *(Bengali)*
Premānand's *Rāmayajña* 17th century
(Gujarati)
Girdhar Rāmāyaṇa 19th century
Balarām Dās' *Daṇḍi Rāmāyaṇa* 16th century
(Oriya)
Haladhara Dās' *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa* 17th century
Visvanātha Khuntia's *Vicitra Rāmāyaṇa* 17th century
Śrīdhara's *Rāmavijaya* 18th century *(Marathi)*
Molla Rāmāyaṇa 16th century *(Telugu)*
Narahari's *Torave Rāmāyaṇa* 16th century
(Kannada)
Raṅganātha Rāmāyaṇa 13th century *(Telugu)*
Nāgacandra's *Pampa Rāmāyaṇa* 12th century Jaina version
Kamban's *Irāmāvatāram* 12th century *(Tamil)*
Ezhuttaccan's *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa* 16th century *(Malayalam)*

Divākara Prakāśa Bhaṭṭa's *Kāśmīrī Rāmāyaṇa* (Kashmiri)

Although current census figures show that only a scant one-half of one percent of all Indians claim Kashmiri as their native tongue, that minute figure is out of all proportion to the considerable impact Kashmiri culture has had on Indian civilization in historical times. That northern region was an intellectual center which contributed much to the development of Buddhism, Śivaism, and Vishṇuism in the subcontinent.

The appearance of the full-blown Rāma-story in Kashmiri literature as early as the 11th century (in Kshemendra's *Rāmāyaṇa-mañjarī*, as well as in his *Kanaka-Jānakī* and his *Daśāvatāracaritam*) demonstrates concretely that cultural exchange was mutual; indeed, Vālmīki's story had early on become a part of Kashmiri popular culture and folklore. That makes it even more curious that the so-called *Kāśmīrī Rāmāyaṇa* did not make its appearance until so late, in 1846. It is a poem written by Divākara Prakāśa Bhaṭṭa, and hence sometimes also referred to the *Prakāś Rāmāyaṇa*. Although no full translation into English of this late work exists, interested students may turn to Sir George A. Grierson's detailed summary of it (49 [see pp. xxxii-l]).

Prakāśa's *Kāśmīrī Rāmāyaṇa* contains 87 chapters, almost 1800 verses. Based on the earthly life of the Prince of Ayodhyā, the poem adheres to the general narrative line established by Vālmīki, but features some significant changes of detail which are pertinent--despite their late surfacing--to the study of the evolving Rāma-theme in Indian literature. In structural design it is divided into two major sections. The first, called *Śrīrāmāvatāracarita*, contains slightly more than 60 chapters comprising 1100 verses divided into 7 conventionally named *kāṇḍa*s. The "*Bāla-kāṇḍa*" is made up of 7 chapters, comprising 143 verses, the opening 48 of which serve as a prologue; the "*Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa*" contains 11 chapters comprising 167 verses; the "*Araṅya-kāṇḍa*" has 7 chapters and 131 verses; while the "*Kishkindhā-kāṇḍa*" consists of 1 long chapter of 68 verses, the "*Sundara-kāṇḍa*" is made up of 12 chapters--263 verses--and contains the legends of Rāvaṇa's birth which, in Vālmīki, had been relegated to the "*Uttara-kāṇḍa*" of the original *Rāmāyaṇa*. The "*Yuddha-kāṇḍa*" and its 17 chapters comprise 320 verses, and a brief "*Uttara-kāṇḍa*" telling of Rāma's triumphal return to Ayodhyā has only 5 chapters and 39 verses. The second major section, at 26 chapters and 627 verses, is nearly half again as long as the *Śrīrāmāvatāracarita*. It is called *Lavakuśayuddhacarita*, and contains some notable elements reminiscent of the Bengali *Rāmāyaṇa* by Kṛittivāsa, reviewed above on pages 46-48.

In the *Kāśmīrī Rāmāyaṇa* as in other versions of the story beyond India--e.g., the Khotanese, Tibetan and Jaina versions--Sītā is the daughter of Rāvaṇa by Mandodarī. In Rāvaṇa's absence, Mandodarī gives birth to an infant but, upon learning that the child's horoscope predicted that she would cause Rāvaṇa's death, the mother ties a stone around the baby's neck and casts her upon the waters. Sītā is miraculously washed ashore, where she is found by King Janaka and reared as his own child. Later on, as in the Bengali and Jaina versions, and several circulating in Southeast Asia, the reason given for Sītā's banishment has to do with a picture of Rāvaṇa she is tricked into drawing by some evil female relatives, who use it as evidence to arouse Rāma's jealousy. As for the twins, Lava and Kuśa, Sītā gives birth only to Lava, while Kuśa is conjured up by Vālmīki from a blade of grass as the exact replica of Lava when he mistakenly thought that Sītā's child had been carried off by beasts (a train of events not unlike those rehearsed in Tibetan and Jaina versions of the story). But it is the penultimate developments leading up to Sītā's descent into the earth where the most remarkable changes occur, and where one most readily recalls the parallels noted in the review, above, of the Bengali version by Kṛittivāsa.

Vālmīki teaches the twins archery, as well as giving them powerful *astra*-mantras to direct their weapons unfailingly. One day their frolics are interrupted by the arrival of a wandering horse which Kuśa playfully mounts. Seeing his twin brother abused by Bharata for this deed, Lava shoots Bharata and kills him. In turn, Lava slays Śatrughna. Lakshmaṇa then arrives, and he is killed by the redoubtable twins. After this, Aṅgada, Sugrīva, Jāmbavān, Hanumān, and even Rāma fall victim to their deadly weapons. Laughing, the boys carry off the crowns of their eight victims, and skip back with them to their mother. Sītā recognizes the crowns, and determines to perform *satī* where Rāma has fallen. Upon learning what has transpired, Vālmīki, with Sītā's help, resurrects all of the heroes. Thereupon, Sītā, in a sudden shift of feeling, retreats once more to her cottage where she remains unmoved by Rāma's petitions to return from her banishment, and to accompany him and the twins back to Ayodhyā. Upon Vālmīki's advice, Rāma goes back to his capital with Lava and Kuśa and there performs an *aśvamedha* horse-sacrifice. There, the story returns to more conventional lines, and Sītā is exonerated by her descent into the earth, after which Rāma ascends into heaven.

Other Regional Versions Available in Synopsis Form

Three other regional variants of the Rāma-story must be noted in this section. None of them is available fully in English translation; all are at hand only as brief summaries in English. It must be stressed that not one of them is known to enjoy wide dissemination, either now or in its heyday. They remain curiosities, valuable mainly for what they reveal of the legend as it moved into different sectors of Indian culture.

The first (50) was discovered on a scroll in Chinese Turkestan. The reverse side of the scroll had earlier borne a Buddhist sūtra. The re-use of Buddhist scrolls, by that time considered wastepaper, dates the later writing on the obverse side--in the Tibetan language--at sometime between 700 and 900 A.D. Interestingly, the version of the Rāma-story on this palimpsest is not Buddhist-inspired; the document reflects Brahmanical sentiments. Although clearly based on the Vālmīki epic, the details of this Tibetan version differ from the original in the following ways:

a. The story opens with the narrative of Daśagrīva's origins.*

b. Sītā is born as the daughter of one of Daśagrīva's wives--the name Mandodarī is not specified--and the infant Sītā is abandoned, set adrift in a vessel, and then rescued and adopted by peasants; King Janaka is not mentioned.

c. Daśaratha has but two sons, Rāma and Lakshmaṇa, born through the medium of a flower rather than of food.

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*This name rather than Rāvaṇa is regularly used.

d. Rāma voluntarily exiles himself while Lakshmaṇa stays behind with the pair of royal clogs.

e. Sītā marries Rāma, who gives up his ascetic life and is crowned king.

f. Śūrpaṇakhā appears at this point in the story.

g. Sītā is seized, along with a surrounding plot of ground,* by Daśagrīva, who appeared to her first as an elephant, then as a horse.

h. Sugrīva wins his battle over Bāli [=Vālin] with a mirror tied to his tail, rather than a garland around his neck, and then takes three years to come to Rāma's relief.

i. Daśagrīva, not Indrajit, employs the magical strategem of invisibility to vex his enemies.

j. Daśagrīva is killed by an arrow of Rāma's, which severs his horse-head--one of his ten heads--and Sītā is thereupon liberated.

k. Lava is born prior to Sītā's sojourn in the forest, to which she freely goes in her search for Rāma, who is long overdue from a battle. Kuśa, however, is created by *muni*s of the forest who mistakenly believe that Lava, who is temporarily lost, has met an untimely death. Sītā is content with the two similar sons.

l. Sītā's later banishment is occasioned by the words of a washerwoman; she and her two sons are eventually recalled, and they all live happily in the palace with Rāma thereafter.

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*This detail predates its use by Kamban (see [36], p. 135).

Another variant (51) originates in Khotan [Hvatanai, now part of the People's Republic of China]. It also contains elements found in other northern recensions. Most pertinent to the development of the theme as so far traced is the fact that Sītā's birth is traced to the house of Rāvaṇa, as in the Tibetan and Kashmiri variants. Numerous other narrative points coincide with other northern versions while at the same time diverging from Vālmīki. But it should be especially noted that, since this is a Buddhist version of the tale, Rāma is none other than the Buddha in a former birth, and at the end Rāvaṇa is converted to Buddhism rather than killed. Other interesting features include Paraśurāma's role, which is different and accorded more significant emphasis than in other versions; Sītā's role as co-wife of Rāma and Lakshmaṇa; and Rāma's and Lakshmaṇa's concealment of themselves beneath the earth for twelve years. For another recasting of the tale in Buddhist terms, see pp. ., below.

A late, Sri Lankan variant (52), dating perhaps from the 18th century, also derives from Buddhist sources. In this Sinhalese folk-tradition, Sītā has three sons, not twins as in the original story; one is born naturally of Sītā, and the other two are miraculously created by Vālmīki. Exploits that in other versions are attributed to Hanumān are here credited to Bāli [=Vālin], elevating him to a new stature unknown in the original epic. As in the Bengali, Kashmiri, Jaina and other versions of the story dispersed in Southeast Asia, the motivation for Sītā's banishment is a picture of Rāvaṇa she is asked to draw by a female intimate, which picture arouses Rāma's rage. Her three sons are reared in Vālmīki's ashram during the years of Sītā's abandonment by Rāma, and at the age of seven they leave her to go to Malaya country. There they set up three royal parks and palaces, where they live thereafter. However intriguing some of the details may be, it must be stressed that this Sinhalese version, like the other two just reviewed, is not widely known; it now survives in the Kandyan dancers' repertory, having originally been a narrative accompaniment to a ritual known as *Kohom̆bā Yakkama*. Much more instructive in regard to the diffusion of the ancient narrative in a Sinhalese setting is a Sanskrit poem called *Jānakīharaṇa* (see [93], below). This Sanskrit work, composed in Ceylon, is a Hindu handling of the tale rather than a Buddhist recapitulation.

DRAMATIC, POETIC, DIDACTIC AND RELIGIOUS VARIATIONS ON THE THEME

The preceding section surveying regional variants of the Rāma-story was taken out of chronological order because students new to the study of the *Rāmāyaṇa* who accidentally encounter those later compositions might easily, given their unfamiliarity with the voluminous Rāma-literature, confuse them with Vālmīki's ancient epic poem. But, in addition to the regional variants, there are numerous other forms the Rāma-theme has assumed: as dramas, as more or less conventional *kāvya*-compositions, and as didactic, religious tracts articulating partisan perspectives.

Ask any educated Hindu knowledgeable in Sanskrit for a rendering of the Rāma-theme other than Vālmīki's, and the first response is likely to be Kālidāsa, or Bhavabhūti, or the "*Adhyātma*," with no mention of Tulsīdās or Kamban or of other regional variants, no matter how popular those may be with the (local) masses. The earliest of the works now under review precedes the first of the regional variants by many centuries. And, predating even these are recapitulations of the tale in Buddhist *Jātaka*s as well as in Jaina transformations of the story. But those will be taken up in the section following this present, tripartite one.

Rāma-Drama

(53) Pisharoti, K.R. (tr.) "*Abhiṣeka-nāṭaka* by Bhāsa." *Annamalai University Journal* IV (1935): 133-148, 277-286; V (1936):121-135, 245-253.

(54) Woolner, A.C. (tr.) "The Consecration (*Abhisheka-nāṭaka*)." *Thirteen Trivandrum Plays Attributed to Bhāsa*. Vol. II, pp. 143-178. Oxford: Oxford University Press (Panjab University Oriental Publications, No. 13), 1930-31.

(55) Janaki, S.S. (tr.) *The Statue*. Madras: The Kuppuswami Sastri Research Institute, 1978.

(56) Rao, Amiya, and Rao, B.G. (tr.) *Three Plays of Bhāsa*. New Delhi: Orient Longmans, 1971. pp. 79-147.

(57) Kale, M.R. (tr.) *Pratimā of Bhāsa*. Bombay: Gopal Narayan and Co., 1930.

(58) Woolner, A.C. (tr.) "The Statue Play (*Pratimā-nāṭaka*)." *Thirteen Trivandrum Plays Attributed to Bhāsa*. Vol. I, pp. 151-200. Oxford: Oxford University Press (Panjab University Oriental Publications, No. 13), 1930-31.

(59) Devadhar, C.R. (tr.) *Bhāsa's Pratimā-nāṭaka*. Poona: Shree Ganesh Printing Works, 1927.

(60) Paranjee, S.M. (tr.) *Pratimā-nāṭaka by Bhāsa*. Poona: Oriental Book Agency, 1927.

(61) Bhanot, S.D., and Vyas, V. (tr.) *Kundamālā of Diṅnāga.* Lahore: Moti Lal Banarsi Dass, 1937, 2nd edition, revised and enlarged (orig., 1932). Plot summary, pp. xii-xvii; translation, pp. 1-156 (orig., 1-94).

(62) Woolner, A.C. (tr.) *The Jasmine Garland* (*Kundamālā*). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1935 (orig., Lahore: 1929). Introduction, pp. v-xiv; translation, pp. 1-50.

(63) Mall, T. (tr.) *Mahāvīracarita.* London: Oxford University Press (Panjab University Oriental Publications), 1928.

(64) Pickford, J. (tr.) *Bhavabhūti's Mahāvīracarita.* London: Trubner, 1871.

(65) Belvalkar, S.K. (ed.) *Rāma's Later History, or Uttara-rāma-carita: An Ancient Hindu Drama by Bhavabhūti.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press (Harvard Oriental Series, Vol. 21, Pt. 1), 1915. pp. lxiii-lxvii.

(66) Wilson, H.H. *Theater of the Hindus.* Delhi: Indological Book House, 1972 (orig., Calcutta: 1955, based on previous editions going back to *Select Specimens of the Theater of the Hindus.* London: Trubner, 1871).

(67) Keith, A.B. *The Sanskrit Drama in its Origin, Development, Theory and Practice.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1924.

(68) Belvalkar, S.K. (tr.) *Rama's Later History, or Uttara-rāma-carita: An Ancient Hindu Drama*

by Bhavabhuti. Cambridge: Harvard University Press (Harvard Oriental Series, Vol. 21, Pt. 1), 1915. Lengthy synopsis, pp. 2-14; translation, pp. 15-102; discussion of the play, pp. lxxvi-lxxxv.

(69) Wells, H.G. (tr.) "Rama's Later History (*Uttararāmacarita*)." *Sanskrit Plays from Epic Sources.* Baroda: University of Baroda, 1968. Rendered into English with occasional versifications, pp. 163-258.

(70) Bhat, G.K. (tr.) *Uttararāmacarita.* Surat: Popular Publishing House, 1965, 2nd edition, revised and enlarged (orig., 1953).

(71) Kale, M.R. (tr.) *Uttararāmacarita.* Bombay: Gopal Narayan and Co., 1934 (previous editions, Bombay: 1924, 1901).

(72) Ray, S. (tr.) *Uttararāmacarita.* Calcutta and Dacca: S. Ray and Co., 1924.

(73) Patvardhan, V.S. (tr.) *Uttararāmacarita.* Bombay: Damodar Savalaram and Co., 1909, 2nd edition (orig., Nagpur: 1895).

(74) Bhatta Charya, K.K. (tr.) *Uttararāmacarita.* Calcutta: Kedar Nath Bose, 1891.

(75) Mukhopadhyaya, H. (tr.) *Uttararāmacarita.* Calcutta: The Girisha-Vidyāratna, 1871.

(76) Śankararama Sastri, C. (tr.) *The Wonderful Crest-jewel....* Mylapore [Madras]: Sri Balamanorama Press, 1927 (Sri Balamanorama Series, vol. 10).

(77) Vasudeva Sarma, R.V. (tr.) *The Wonderful Crest-Jewel.* Trichinopoly: ..., 1927.

(78) Venkatarama Sastri, S. (tr.) *Bālarāmāyaṇa by Rājaśekhara.* Bangalore: Irish Press, 1910.

(79) Ramachandra Aiyar, L.V. (tr.) *Jānakī-pariṇaya.* Madras: Oriental Press, 1906. pp. 1-149.

(80) Raghavan, V. *Some Old Lost Rama Plays.* Annamalainagar: Annamalai University, 1961.

(81) Bahadur, K. (tr.) *Mahānāṭaka, A Dramatic History of King Rāma by Hanūmat.* Calcutta: Columbian Press, 1840. pp. 1-101.

(82) Paranjape, S.M., and Panse, N.S. (ed., tr.) *Prasanna Rāghava.* Poona: Shiralkar and Co., 1894. Introduction, pp. i-xvii, re: dating and authorship.

(83) Rāma Pāṇivāda. *Sītā-rāghava.* Trivandrum: Government Press (Trivandrum Sanskrit Series, No. 192), 1958. pp. 1-6.

The tales of twisted destinies, separated lovers, suffering nobility, and daring anti-heroes in the Rāma-story are a natural source of inspiration for dramatists. Since audiences are already familiar with the "plot" and attuned to its emotional resonances, any play based on the Rāma-theme--or even any part of it--provides for the playwright and spectators alike a ready store of episodes to be recalled, reviewed, remembered, and an ample reserve of sentiments to be evoked, stimulated, savored. The theatre literature of the Hindus is rich and varied fare; Rāma-drama represents a respectable repertory within it. In these as in other "Sanskrit" dramas, Prakrit is used for the comic roles and by the actors depicting most women's roles, while the Sanskrit lines are reserved for the male characters of heroic mold (viz., Rāma, Lakshmaṇa, Daśaratha, Viśvāmitra, et al.).

One of the earliest dramatists whose "Sanskrit" plays may be read in English translations is the fourth century Bhāsa who is believed to have come from the western coastlands of South India. His ancient plays are still used, at least in part, as standard elements of modern dance dramas in coastal Kerala and Karnataka states. Two of his plays are based on the Rāma-theme, and both are available in full English translations. One, called *Abhiṣeka-nāṭaka* ("The Consecration") deals in six acts with the events of the "*Kishkindhā*-," "*Sundara*-," and "*Yuddha*-" *kāṇḍa*s of the original epic, and culminates with the triumph of the hero at his coronation scene (53, 54). As with Bhāsa's other plays the characters in it--most especially the men--are strongly delineated, the action bold and clear. The other Bhāsa play, *Pratimā-nāṭaka* ("The Statue"), extends to seven acts depicting selected episodes from the "*Ayodhyā*-" and "*Araṇya*-" *kāṇḍa*s, with the addition of a brief reunion with Sītā and other family members, followed by the preparation of all to return to Ayodhyā (55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60). In it one sees a striking example of how the ancient master playwright ignored at least one cardinal rule of Indian dramaturgy: in Act II the ancient king, Daśaratha, after lamenting for his exiled son Rāma, dies onstage. The two Bhāsa plays relate to one another only in that they both draw upon familiar incidents of the epic for their inspiration, and both serve in different ways to soften several of the traits which in the original epic had blemished the characters of the leading personalities. Indeed, it is these new nuances of portrayal which have time and again roused the admiration of those watching the performances, both originally and throughout the centuries to recent times.

Another early play, dating from the sixth century, affords clues that the author, even then, was among those who viewed Rāma not as a mere mortal but as an *avatāra* of Vishṇu. This holds importance for students wishing to trace the history of an idea, the conception of which remains so mysteriously ambiguous in Vālmīki's original. This is the play by Dhīranāga [var., Diṅnāga] known as *Kundamālā* ("The Jasmine Garland"), available in two full English versions (61, 62). It covers a ten-year period in its six acts: the opening scene commences with Sītā's abandonment by Lakshmaṇa, while the closing acts ends with the happy reunion of Sītā and Rāma after Kuśa and Lava have recited the story, and after the Earth has risen to vindicate Sītā's chastity. Much of what constitutes the middle part of the 18-character play, however, is the invention of Dhīranāga, which critics take as proof not only of his inspiration from Vālmīki but also of his independence from his source. In that central portion there are scenes in which the sage Vālmīki instructs the youthful Kuśa and Lava in the story and its recitation; and there is an affecting encounter between Rāma and Sītā in the forest. It is believed that some of these elements original with Dhīranāga were later borrowed by Bhavabhūti (see below). Indeed, the work often elicits favorable comparison with both Bhavabhūti and with Kālidāsa.

Bhavabhūti (fl. 730) is second only to India's universally acknowledged reigning playwright and supreme poet, Kālidāsa, whose use of the classical Sanskrit language is unsurpassed. While Bhavabhūti's plots are said to be superior, this is difficult to demonstrate here, for Kālidāsa has no play based on the Rāma-theme* to compare to Bhavabhūti's two plays celebrating Rāma, which are treasures within India's bountiful theatrical literature. The earlier of the two, the *Mahāvīracarita* ("The Tale of the Great Hero"), deals with that part of Rāma's life from shortly after his marriage up to his coronation; in this treatment Rāma's divinity is clearly assumed. Complete translations of the seven-act play are available, though difficult to obtain (63, 64); a summary is available in one of the standard editions of the author's other play (65), while short descriptions of the piece are available in two widely used studies of Sanskrit drama (see [66], pp. 98-105, and [67], pp. 188-190, 193-195). The later of these two dramas, called *Uttararāmacarita* ("Rāma's Later History"), has stimulated many translators to render it into English (68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75). In this seven-act play the action commences just before the abandonment of the pregnant Sītā, and moves to a happy reunion of Rāma and Sītā, Kuśa and Lava. A reversal of the original epic takes place in this drama, wherein the Earth personified presents her purified daughter, Sītā, to the noble Rāma, rather than disappearing forever into the depths with Sītā. Bhavabhūti's later play, incorporating many of the elements of the "*Uttarakāṇḍa*" so often ignored even today, never abandons the author's stance of affirming Rāma's divinity;

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*See, however, (85) through (89), below.

still, in this composition, he seems to emphasize the royal hero's human characteristics more than in the earlier *Mahāvīracarita*.

Yet another Southern writer, Śaktibhadra, who is said to have been a 9th century Nambūdiri *brāhmaṇa* from the Kerala or Malabār coastal area, wrote on the Rāma-theme for the theater. His seven-act play (76, 77), which is still very popular among actors of Malabār, starts with Śūrpanakhā's encounter with Lakshmaṇa, and moves through Sītā's abduction, restoration, fire ordeal, and reconciliation with Rāma. As its title suggests, in *Āścarya-cūḍāmaṇī* ("The Wonderful Crest Jewel"), a dramatic significance is placed on the decorative forehead ornament that Sītā is wearing when abducted, and that she later gives to Hanumān for Rāma, in token of having received his message of the ring. In many ways, this is one of the more immediately satisfying plays on the Rāma-theme available to readers of English.

A brief description and discussion of a play called *Bālarāmāyaṇa* is contained in Keith (67 [pp. 232-234]), but only five of the play's ten massive acts are available in English translation. Written by the early 10th century dramatist Rājaśekhara, from the area now known as Maharashtra, its dominating features include the love with which Rāvaṇa is smitten for Sītā.

Among those plays currently available in translation, another must be noted here. This later, 17th century work seems to hail from a time when all of the freshness and most of the creative vigor had abandoned the genre, and it is not a good piece to read when one is new to Rāma-drama. It is the seven-act play *Jānakīpariṇaya* ("The Marriage of Jānakī [or, Sītā]") by Rāmabhadra Dikshitār [alias, Cokkanātha] (79). The production, as it was staged, took several liberties with the sequence of episodes in the original epic exposition--Daśagrīva (Rāvaṇa) is introduced early as a frustrated contestant for Sītā's hand--though in general terms, the action covers the period from the contest for Sītā's hand to her return from captivity, including the consequent arrangements in Ayodhyā for the return of the reunited Rāma and Sītā. In its unfolding, the drama makes much use of *rakshasa*s' ability to take on other identities, and for other characters to assume disguises, resulting in confusion of characters by those engaged in the action. The audience is kept informed by many asides from the actors; the device of having characters onstage who are invisible to other characters is tediously overused; and the playwright resorts several times to describing crucial action taking place offstage, out of sight. Act VI consists almost entirely of a play-within-a-play, which is a conventional (though scarcely convincing) solution for recapitulating events which have already transpired dramatically. The cast requires more than forty players. Altogether this is an unsatisfying work, far inferior to those of Bhavabhūti, Bhāsa, and Śaktibhadra.

Before leaving this brief survey of Rāma-drama, it is useful to mention half-a-dozen plays which may serve to supplement the serious student's review of Indian plays based on the Rāma-theme. Two of the six have been laboriously reconstructed by use of passages quoted from them in other works and in anthologies, since their originals have been lost during the centuries. Another is one that has been recently translated but not as yet (1983) published. Still another, translated in the first half of the 19th century, is rare and extremely difficult to locate. Yet another is known to have been translated but has not been located despite searching; the last is available only as a brief synopsis for non-Sanskrit readers.

The reconstructed plays make interesting study for those who love a mystery, or who admire an astute detective alert to clues and who thus can celebrate a good unraveling of a tale. For them, V. Raghavan's book, *Some Old Lost Rāma Plays* (80), is recommended. The late polymath describes in it (pp. 1-25, especially 11*ff.*) what the lost six-act play *Rāmābhyudaya* ("Waxing Rāma"?) must have been like. This play, written by the late 8th century king, Yaśovarman, begins with the emergence of the exiles in the Pañchavaṭī Glade ("*Araṇya-kāṇḍa*") in Raghavan's restoration, and ends with Rāma's coronation after the battle ("*Yuddha-kāṇḍa*"). Later in the book (pp. 26-49, especially 32*ff.*), Raghavan culls widely dispersed quotations and excerpts in subsequent literature to reconstruct the play *Kṛtyā-rāvaṇa* ("The Deeds of Rāvaṇa"). Written by an unknown author who flourished before the mid-9th century, the play's date is uncertain as well.

The translated but as yet unpublished work is a Rāma-drama which was once more popular than either Bhavabhūti's or Kālidāsa's plays. Murāri's late-10th century *Anargha-rāghava* ("Priceless Rāghava [Rāma]), is sometimes referred to as *Murāri-nāṭaka*. While this work has been described by both Wilson (66 [pp. 130-137; orig., II:375-383]) and Keith (67 [pp. 226-231]), J.P. Losty of the British Library had not quite completed the revisions to his translation as of (late) 1982. Among the many noteworthy attributes of the play is the fact that it makes quite clear (in Act VII) that Rāvaṇa's Laṅkā is not the same as Siṁhala, or modern-day Sri Lanka (Ceylon).

Among those plays which in translation are so difficult to locate as to be virtually nonexistent is the nine-act play appropriately named *Mahānāṭaka* ("Great Drama") (81). This longish drama comprises 24 scenes, and requires a large cast. The action covers the events from Rāma's contest for Sītā's hand all the way through his victorious return from Laṅkā to Ayodhyā with his rescued wife. A tradition associated with this work holds that it was originally written by Hanumān prior to Vālmīki's time--hence it is sometimes referred to as *Hanumān-nāṭaka* --and then hidden by Vālmīki, jealous because its style outshone his own. In fact, it comes down from about the 11th century in two recensions, and may or may not be traceable to pre-existing fragments of an earlier Hanumān tradition. In either event, what is now seen "plagiarizes shamelessly" (67 [p. 271]), according to Keith, who notes that it contains whole lines from Kālidāsa and Bhavabhūti as well as situations lifted from other works. These are not easily spotted in a translation. This same play is said to be among the sources which heavily influenced Tulasīdāsa. For students using this bibliography as a reading guide, the *Mahānāṭaka* will be remembered as a play which handles large blocks of the Rāma-story with extraordinary economy. For those unable to procure a copy of the now-rare 1840 translation by K.K. Bahadur, Adolf Esteller did a German translation in 1937 (reprinted in 1966), and Wilson also provides a résumé (66 [pp. 122-130; orig., II:363-373]).

Another translation that is very difficult to find is *Prasanna-rāghava* ("The Tranquil Rāghava" [Rāma]") by the 16th century logician Jayadeva. Sir Ganganatha Jha reportedly translated this play under an Allahabad imprint in 1906, but the compiler of the present bibliography has not seen it, and the report of its existence may have confused a commentary in Sanskrit which Sir G.N. Jha wrote based on the play,* for the supposed translation. Verification of the translation could not be made before press time. Meanwhile, students must make do with the meager information about the play found in English elsewhere (82). This seven-act drama spans the life of Rāma from his wedding to Sītā until his final victory over Rāvaṇa. While it has never earned high praise as a dramatic work, W.D.P. Hill (23 [p. xvi]) states that Tulasīdāsa "appears to have been specially influenced by ... " this work, too. It is briefly described in Keith (67 [pp. 244-246]), who reports that in its opening act, both Rāvaṇa and the Āsura Bāṇa are contestants for Sītā's hand but fail to break Śiva's bow. Students perusing library card catalogues should be forewarned that this Jayadeva is not the same Jayadeva of *Gītā-govinda* fame.

The final play to note is the mid-18th century drama by Rāmapaṇivāda, *Sītā-rāghava* (83), a seven-act play for which only a brief--though useful--synopsis in English currently exists.

Before moving on, it should be noted that from time to time classes advance original dramatizations based on the Rāma-story. These formidable projects are no doubt instructive exercises for the energetic individuals involved; however, in part because they are amateur theatricals, such presentations inevitably result in lamentable occasions. The reasons probably have more to do with the scripts used than

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**Pandit* [New Series], Varanasi, Vol. 26-28 [1904-06]), reprinted in book form (Allahabad: Medical Hall Press, 1906).

with the companies' histrionic limitations. Those who are looking for vehicles to stage as a collateral learning activity to a study of the *Rāmāyaṇa* might be better served were they to look at some of the ancient Rāma-dramas in translation. Judiciously edited to suit the tastes of contemporary Westerners, one of the classical Sanskrit plays already translated--for example, Śaktibhadra's *Āścarya-cūḍāmaṇi* (76, 77)--might be effectively staged before appreciative Indo-American and North American audiences.

Poetic Works in the *Kāvya* and *Mahākāvya* Traditions

(84) Upadhyaya, R. *Sanskrit and Prakrit Mahākāvyas*. Saugar: Sanskrit Parishad, 1962 (?).

(85) Antoine, R. (tr.) *The Dynasty of Raghu.* Calcutta: Writer's Workshop, 1972.

(86) Anantapadmanabhan, K.N. (tr.) *Raghuvamsam of Kalidasa: An English Version*. Madras: Ramayana Publishing House, 1973.

(87) Nandargikar, G.R. (tr.) *The Raghuvaṁśa of Kālidāsa*.... Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1971 (orig., Bombay: 1897).

(88) Joglekar, K.M. (tr.) *Raghuvaṁśa*. Bombay: Pandurang Jawaji, 1925.

(89) Johnston, P. DeL. (tr.) *Raghuvaṁśa*. London: J.M. Dent & Co., 1902.

(90) Handiqui, K.K. (tr.) *Pravarasena's Setubandha*. Ahmedabad: Prakrit Text Society (Prakrit Text Series, No. 20), 1976. Outline of the work, pp. 2-15 (first pagination series); English translation of the text, pp. 1-170 (second pagination series).

(91) Basak, Radhagovinda (ed.) *Pravarasena's Rāvaṇavaha-mahākāvyam*.... Calcutta: Calcutta Sanskrit College (Calcutta Sanskrit College Research Series, No. 8, Texts No. 6, 3rd edition), 1959. Résumé, pp. xxi-lvii; discussion of text and its composer, pp. v-xxi.

(92) Leonardi, G.G. (tr.) *Bhaṭṭikāvyam.* Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1972.

(93) Swaminathan, C.R. (tr.) *Jānakīharaṇa of Kumāradāsa.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1977. pp. 53-96.

(94) Paranavita, S., and Godakumbura, C.E. (tr.) *The Jānakīharaṇa of Kumāradāsa.* Colombo: Sri Lanka Sahitya Mandalaya, 1967. pp. xxxix-xlv.

(95) Godakumbura, C.E. "A Note on the *Jānakīharaṇa.*" *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (Ceylon)* XI (1967):93-98.

(96) Basak, Radhagovinda (tr.) *Rāmacaritam of Sandhyākaranandin.* Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1969 (orig., Rajshahi: 1939).

(97) Desika Chariar, N.V., Kasturi Ranga, G., and Sampath, R.N. (ed., tr.) *Haṁsasandeśa of Vedānta Deśika.* Madras: Vedanta Desika Research Society (Homage to Desika Series, No. 2), 1973. Literal prose translation, pp. 192-280; blank verse rendering, pp. i-xxxii.

(98) Narayana Iyengar, S. (tr.) *Sri Vedanta Desika's Hamsasandesa.* Madras: V. Ramaswamy Sastrulu and Sons, 1955, 3rd edition. pp. 93-126.

(99) Ramaswami Sastri, K.S. (ed.) *Rāmacarita of Abhinanda.* Baroda: Oriental Institute (Gaekwad's Oriental Series, Vol. 46), 1930. "Introduction" in English, pp. vii-xxix; see especially xxv*f*.

(100) Pisharoti, K.R. (ed.) *Uttararāmacaritakāvya*. Mylapore [Madras]: Sri Balamanorama Press, 1934. Detailed Table of Contents in English, see pp. xxiii-xxiv.

(101) Krishnamacharya, V. (ed.) *Śrīharicaritamahākāvya*. Adyar: Adyar Library and Research Centre (Adyar Library Series, No. 102), 1972. "Introduction" in English, pp. xiii-xliv, see especially xxiii*ff*.

(102) Ravi Varma, L.A. (ed.) *Rāmapaṇivāda's Rāghavīya*. Trivandrum: Government Press (University of Travencore Sanskrit Series, No. 146), 1942.

One of the most impressive directions toward which the creative genius of Indian writers expanded was in the development of increasingly sophisticated *kāvya*-type poetic works. Recall that Vālmīki is often referred to as the first/premier/foremost poet [*ādikavi*] by virtue of the *śloka*-verse he reputedly invented and which he used to such advantage in the *Rāmāyaṇa*. That composition is often referred to as the first/premier/foremost poem [*ādikāvya*] by virtue of the structure, scope, contents, sentiments and embellishments it displays. Subsequent *kāvya*-writers, seeking to emulate the master's model, likened the necessary, constituent elements of a *kāvya*-work of poetic composition to the intricate, composite nature of a human individual: a complex living being comprises a physical body to which are conjoined characterizing differentiations--personality traits, various outward delineations such as attire and adornment, and several compelling inner drives, motives and intentions. So too is a poetic work a happy combination of basic, conventional sounds, or words [*śabda*], to which are fused subtleties of meaning [*artha*]--qualifications of tone and emphasis, poetic embellishments of style and imagery, and evocation of suggestive sentiments and resonances and import. The developing *kāvya* tradition witnessed the production of works which emphasized now one, now another of those constituent elements. By and large the convention which emerged was that, in order for a *kāvya*-composition to qualify as a conspicuous [*mahā*-] example of the genre, it had not merely to attain an approximate bulk (most often 20 cantos, more or less), but had moreover to manifest a set inventory of figures of speech, formal descriptions, and tonal priorities.

But the outstanding examples among early *kāvya* works, including the so-called "*mahākāvya*" pieces, were marked by an admirable simplicity: long, compound words were eschewed though they were later to come into vogue, and the explicit diction employed availed itself of no vagueness or ambiguity whatsoever. Specific Sanskrit meters (viz., *Śakvarī*, *Ati-Jagatī*, *Ati-Śakvarī*, *Triṣṭubh*, and *Puṣpitāgrā*) were enjoined to assist the poet to evoke noble responses in his readers, to arouse the several emotions which this and other, related forms of compositions sought to cultivate. In addition, the narrative so told generally adhered to the career of a hero, or to the exploits of several exalted personalities, real or imaginary, and was set forth in a work divided into several discrete sections, each telling in some detail an incident from the larger story. Vālmīki's master model had described a royal hero in banishment as well as in ruling authority; moreoever his narrative included descriptions of assemblies, sending of emissaries of state, the marches of soldiers with diverse regalia and weaponry, the full array of battle in addition to descriptions of peaceful hermitages, sending of messages of love, wanderings through graphically delineated forests and mountains, and endurance of the dislocation caused by separation from loved ones. Imitative epic poems in the subsequent *kāvya*-tradition also employed these as stock items. Prominent features also included descriptions of cities, oceans, rivers, the sun, the moon, the seasons, drinking festivities, gardens, water sports, the birth of a son, and educational and competitive functions (see also [84], passim). A convention requiring all of these constituents developed early on.

The convention produced not only masterpieces but also, in due time, excessive and strained artifices. In the latter case, authors contrived to experiment artfully with the inherent flexibilities of the Sanskrit (or, in some cases, the Prakrit) language in which the poems were composed. Compound words became longer, more complex and allusive. Double entendre, a device technically referred to as *ślesha*, introduced an intentional ambiguity in the reading of a text; this was later to become a leitmotif of what many critics consider to be a degenerate development in the highly cultivated compositions. Descriptions became increasingly more labored and extended, and imagery became self-conscious and strained, more than occasionally improbable.

Yet some tours de force of the developing *kāvya*-genre, including "*mahākāvya*-" compositions, were impressive creations, indeed. Maximizing the potentials of the *ślesha*-device, a number of authors in this remarkable poetic tradition succeeded in contriving works which, when construed at one level, told one story and, when construed at another level, explicated quite another topic. Or, in displays of lexigraphic virtuosity rarely matched elsewhere in world literature, some sophisticated specialists in the genre devised pieces which, when read forward, narrated one matter and, when read backward, yielded another opus altogether.

The Rāma-story was, of course, only one of the many subjects to which *kāvya* and "*mahākāvya*" writers, both early and late, turned for inspiration. Only some of the compositions in the genre based on the Rāma-theme are available in English translations. Yet even the limited number available in translation lend some substance to the foregoing generalizations for students who cannot turn directly to the Sanskrit originals. As was the case with dramatists' use of the Rāma-story, the *kāvya*-composers rarely dealt with the entire epic; more often a *kāvya*-piece, whether long or short, elaborated on some selected section within the larger story. Confident that the framework was already well known, the artful authors presupposed their cultured readers would supply the context.

Kālidāsa has already been mentioned, in the preceding section on Rāma-drama, as India's universally acknowledged, reigning playwright and supreme poet. Although he did not base any of his plays on the Rāma-theme, one of Kālidāsa's poems--which is regarded as an outstanding landmark in the wide-ranging vista of India's poetic literature--is based on it. This is the *Raghuvaṁśa* ("The Dynasty of the Descendents of Raghu, Progenitor of Rāma"), a "*mahākāvya*"- piece in Sanskrit containing 19 cantos. This relatively short work may be taken as an epitome of the "*mahākāvya*" tradition. Conceived of in grand dimensions, it deals with Rāma's ancestors in Cantos I-IX; his life in the middle six cantos, X-XV; and his descendants to the twenty-fourth generation in Cantos XVI-XIX. The beauty of its descriptions and the chaste quality of its style--for which reasons it is hailed as Kālidāsa's finest work--have inspired many translators to try their hands at rendering the *Raghuvaṁśa* adequately into the English idiom. Consequently, many libraries may offer interested readers more than one version of the several which are generally available (85, 86, 87, 88, 89).

Different scholars have placed Kālidāsa at various dates within the span of the fourth to the seventh centuries. Most recent considerations would place him in the fourth or fifth centuries, which makes two data found in his *Raghuvaṁśa* all the more interesting. The first is the fact that, in his telling of the legend, he seems familiar with narrative elements belonging to the supposedly later "*Uttara-kāṇḍa*," namely the abandonment of Sītā, the episodes featuring Lavaṇa and Śambūka, the birth of the twins Lava and Kuśa, Lakshmaṇa's death, and Rāma's ascension. Clearly these elements were known to him as well as to his readers. As noted later in this bibliography (see page 111, below), the Jainas were willing to deal with the events also found in Vālmīki's "*Uttara-kāṇḍa*" from at least the third century C.E. The subsequent, repeated omission of those matters by later authors may have been due more to voluntary suppression than to ignorance--a situation not unlike that which prevails today among those who, for various reasons, opt to omit the events of the epic that follow Rāma's triumphant return to Ayodhyā (e.g., [9], [10], and [17]). The second item to notice is a minor detail he introduces in verse 2 of Canto XII, a nice touch which, after its imprimatur by Tulsīdās' adoption of it and its later repetition by others, has since placed an indelible stamp on the popular imagination. This is the fact that King Daśaratha's discovery that his hair is turning gray is what persuades him to abdicate in favor of his son, Rāma. This detail has continued to be a narrative staple for artists illustrating the Rāma-story even into recent decades.

Another "*mahākāvya*"-work of great repute that is available in English translation comes from an original in Prakrit, that is to say, from one of the several vernaculars derived from Sanskrit. This composition is referred to alternatively as the *Setubandha* ("Construction of the Causeway"), the *Rāvaṇavaha* ("Regicide of Rāvaṇa"), or the *Rāmasetu* ("Bridge for Rāma") (90). Not surprisingly, given two of the titles, this poem places special emphasis on the building of the great causeway [*setu*] between the mainland and the island kingdom of Laṅkā (VI:20-96; VII:1-71; VIII:1-97). King Pravarasena (fl. 575), the author of the 15-canto poem, concentrates his narrative treatment on the events generally associated with Vālmīki's "*Yuddha-kāṇḍa*," for he covers events roughly from Hanumān's return from Laṅkā with tidings of Sītā's condition, to the death of Rāvaṇa followed by the recovery of Sītā. Throughout, Pravarasena introduces conventional descriptions standard to the *kāvya*-genre, which features have, through the centuries, won him high praise from Hindu textual connoisseurs. In the development of the "*mahākāvya*"-epic poem, Pravarasena's *Setubandha* in Prakrit represents a phase where descriptive passages have become extended to the degree that they measure nearly twice the bulk of the strictly narrative sections of the piece. The full translation of the work which has recently become available (ibid.) makes resort to résumés less out of necessity than was heretofore the case (91; also 84 [pp. 210-228]).

The work most popularly known as the *Bhaṭṭikāvya* (92) is an influential *kāvya*-composition. Written sometime in the 6th or 7th centuries, in due time it provided not only the inspiration but also the model for one Yogīśvara (late 10th century), whose adaptation of the Rāma-story into Javanese was destined to determine to a large extent how the epic was transmitted beyond India in Southeast Asia. But that is quite another subject for study. The piece here under consideration tells in 22 brief cantos the bulk of the epic--minus the events of the "*Uttarakāṇḍa*"--from Daśaratha's original ritual to beget progeny (Canto I) to Rāma's return from banishment and his own performance of a victorious horse sacrifice (Canto XXII). In its narration a few details are slightly altered--Janaka is a hermit, not a king; Kaikeyī has no servant, no boons; Daśaratha himself, not his wife, orders Rāma into exile; Śurpaṇakhā insinuates herself upon Lakshmaṇa before turning her attentions to Rāma; etc.--but they are for the most part minor changes. What is much more remarkable about this piece, sometimes also called the *Rāvaṇavadha* ("The Killing of Rāvaṇa"), is that its author Bhaṭṭi (alias, Śrībhaṭṭa) creates in it an exemplar of the increasingly artificial *kāvya*-style as it moves toward ever more fulsome exploitation of the *ślesha* potential of double entendre. For, while the story is being narrated, its words may be construed at another level of meaning so that the poem simultaneously outlines in proper sequence the rules of

Sanskrit grammar and poetics (cf. [102], below). To be sure, it is not feasible in an English rendering to do justice to the dual thrust or to the elegance of the original. The closing decades of the last century witnessed three efforts by Indian translators to deal with the opening few cantos. But a more recent translation by G.G. Leonardi, who provides notes as well, renders the entire poem at its narrative level (92), and interested students should turn to this version.

An admirable example of the conspicuous effort to create a composition of the "*mahākāvya*" genre can be seen in the poem called *Jānakī-haraṇa* ("The Abduction of Sītā"). This impressive work was composed in Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) during the latter half of the 7th century, and focuses on the ever-popular abduction subtheme of the ancient epic. Its author, Kumāradāsa (alias, Kumāradatta or Nāthakumāra), was evidently influenced both in expression and exposition by Kālidāsa, traditionally viewed as his contemporary. Kumāradāsa's poem is, however, considerably longer than the *Rāghuvaṁśa*, as seems consistent with the genre-requirements, which by that time required the inclusion of a number of set elements. Only a scant one-quarter of *Jānakī-haraṇa*--the concluding five cantos--is available in English translation (93). Here the poet recounts what transpires from the point where Rāma and Rāvaṇa engage in preliminary skirmishes prior to their grand battle, up to and culminating with the final coronation of Rāma with Sītā. To supplement this partial translation, interested students should turn to a useful précis of the complete work (94), which also includes an analysis of the number of *ślokas* in each canto given over to various topics. The problems still remain as to the identity and precise dating of Kumāradāsa, and they are discussed briefly elsewhere by Godakumbura (95; cf. "Introduction," 94).

Probably the best example through which non-Sanskrit readers may glimpse something of the *kāvya*-style at a stage of its advanced, conspicuous development, when it makes maximum use of *ślesha*, is in Radhagovinda Basak's translation of Sandhyākaranandin's *Rāmacaritam* ("The Chronicle of Rāma") (96). Sandhyākaranandin was a 12th century author in Bengal who simultaneously told the bare elements of the Rāma-story and eulogized the career of his own king, Rāmapada of Bengal and Bihar. His work is not long. Its four books contain in total* only some 220 verses, including an appended "*kavipraśasti*" which tells who the poet was. Its brevity illustrates the principle of radical selection of narrative elements from a known story so often found in *kāvya*-works. The English rendering by Basak (pp. 1-104) translates each *śloka* twice, version "A" telling the story of Rāma as traditionally transmitted, version "B" yielding the narrative of the exploits of the monarch contemporary with the poet. In addition, the translator provides 80 additional pages of explanatory notes coded to each of the 220 verses; these assist the English reader with the subtleties of syntactic, lexicographic, and contextual considerations pertinent to the text, which is technically illustrative of the "*dvisandhāna*," or "two-in-one" style of *kāvya*-writing.

One more *kāvya*-type poem based on the Rāma-story, and available in full in English translation,

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*Book I, 50 *śloka*s; Book II, 49 *śloka*s; Book III, 48 *śloka*s; Book IV, 48 *śloka*s; the *kavipraśasti*, 20 *śloka*s.

illustrates yet another facet of the highly stylized tradition. This is a 14th century poetic conceit written in imitation of an earlier masterpiece by the venerable Kālidāsa. In his famous *Meghadūta* ("Cloud Messenger"), the earlier writer had described a cloud passing over various landmarks in the northern ranges of India to deliver a lover's message to his lady. Kālidāsa's much-admired work extended to only 110 stanzas, as did the later imitation by the medieval poet-theologian of the South, Vedānta Deśika. His poem, *Haṃsasaṃdeśa* ("Swan Messenger"), likewise draws upon the conceit of a high-flying courier. In *Haṃsasaṃdeśa* (97, 98), Rāma charges a gander with carrying a message from Pampā to his beloved Sītā, held captive in Laṅkā by Rāvaṇa. The winged messenger's flight southward gives the poet an opportunity to describe landmarks along the way; thus in this work of South Indian origin one finds descriptions of such well-known regional centers as Tirupati, Kālahasti, Kāñcīpuram, and Śrīraṅgam. The two works taken together--Kālidāsa's *Meghadūta* and Vedānta Deśika's *Haṃsasaṃdeśa*--are thus jointly praised as complementing one another, although only the latter draws upon the Rāma-theme.

A few additional *kāvya*-works based on the Rāma-theme may be known to readers of English through brief résumés only. The short outlines available serve to give but the gists of the narrative treatments, nothing of the substance or style of the respective pieces. Thus, while the following references are of limited use to most students, they may yet serve to introduce the interested reader to the existence of the works. The compositions so treated are four in number, one of which is Abhinanda's *Rāmacarita* ("The Story of Rāma") (99), a late 9th century "*mahākāvya*" creation in 36 cantos. The poem enlarges upon those events described by Vālmīki in the latter parts of the "*Kishkindhā-kāṇḍa*" through the "*Sundara-kāṇḍa*" to the end of the "*Yuddha-kāṇḍa*," in the course of the retelling altering several accounts, and subtly changing the traits of certain characters. The poem became quite popular, making Abhinanda famous in his own lifetime; in subsequent centuries it was mentioned, quoted, and imitated in many other works, and so this work, composed in Bengal, is a noteworthy *kāvya*-variant of the Rāma-story. The second and third compositions, both late, are important for their inclusion of events following Rāma's coronation, that is, those materials narrated in the "*Uttara-kāṇḍa*" of Vālmīki's original *kāvya*-model, but so often omitted in the recasting of the story (as in the just-mentioned work by Abhinanda [99], and in the equally influential *Bhaṭṭikāvyam* [92] and the *Jānakīharana* [93]). The anonymously written *Uttara-rāma-carita* ("The Later History of Rāma") (100) appeared in Kerala sometime in the 17th or 18th centuries. In 5 cantos, it deals with the rule of Rāma in Ayodhyā, the birth of his twin sons during Sītā's banishment, and their final reconciliation with Rāma before his ascension. The 18th century *Śrīharicarita-mahākāvya* ("The Epic of the Blessed Lord") (101) includes the later, post-coronation events as part of its narration of the entire story in 16 cantos. The fourth of the *kāvya*-compositions, albeit not itself available in translation, may be sampled through a brief, technical introduction to the poem in English (102 [pp. 1-30]). This work is called *Rāghavīya* ("Concerning Rāma"), and it was written by the Kerala poet Rāmapāṇivāda who was mentioned in the section on Rāma-drama (cf. [83], above). Here it is relevant to the influential *Bhaṭṭikāvyam* (92) described above, and like it, it is a work which tells the main events of the Rāma-story while simultaneously serving as an explication for the rules of Sanskrit grammar. This *Rāghavīya*, written in 20 cantos, seems also to have been intended as a *kāvya*-text for use by advanced students of Sanskrit in their mastery of grammar and prosody.

Didactic and Religious Works Using the Rāma-Theme

(103) van Buitenen, J.A.B. (tr.) *The Mahābhārata: 2. The Book of the Assembly Hall; 3. The Book of the Forest.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1975. pp. 727-759; see also pp. 207-214 for discussion.

(104) Raghavan, V. *The Greater Ramayana.* Varanasi: The All-India Kashiraj Trust, 1973.

(105) Dutt Shastri, M.N. (tr.) *Agni Purāṇa.* Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1967. 2 volumes. See Vol. I:21-51; cf. II:851-880.

(106) Raghunathan, N. (tr.) *Srimad Bhāgavatam.* Madras: Vighneswara Publishing House, 1976. 2 volumes. II:114-123.

(107) Sanyal, J.M. (tr.) *The Srimad Bhagavatam.* Calcutta: Oriental Publishing House, 1965. 5 volumes. II:206-217.

(108) Tagare, G.V. (tr.) *Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology: Bhāgavata Purāṇa.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1976. Vol. 9:1177-1190.

(109) Sen, R.N. (tr.) *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa.* Allahabad: The Panini Office, Bhuvaneshwari Ashram, 1920. ["Sacred Books of the Hindus," Vol. 24, pts. 1 and 2.] See Vol. I:127-129 and Vol. II:343-347.

(110) Dutt Shastri, M.N. (tr.) *Garuḍa Purāṇa.* Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, 1968. pp. 409-416.

(111) Shastri, J.L. (ed.) *Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology: The Garuḍa Purāṇa, Part I.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978. Vol. 12:410-416.

(112) Bhattacharya, A., et al. (tr.) *The Kūrma Purāṇa.* Varanasi: All-India Kashiraj Trust, 1972. pp. 149-152, 478-481.

(113) Shastri, J.L. (tr.) *Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology: Śiva Purāṇa.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1970. 4 volumes. Vol. I:386-392.

(114) Wilson, H.H. (tr.) *The Vishnu Purana: A System of Hindu Mythology and Tradition.* Calcutta: Punthi Pustak, 1961. pp. 306-308.

(115) Srinivasa Ayyangar, T.R. (tr.) *The Vaiṣṇavopaniṣad-s.* Adyar: Adyar Library (The Adyar Library Series, No. 52), 1945. pp. 380-410, 410-438, 439-481.

(116) Danielou, Alain (tr.) "Sītā-Upaniṣad: The 'Nearest Approach' to the 'Divine Furrow.' A Śākta Upaniṣad translated with Notes and Explanatory Interpretation based on the Commentary of Śrī Upaniṣad-Brahma-Yogin." *Adyar Library Bulletin* (*New Series*) 19 (1955):313-326.

(117) Mainkar, T.G. *The Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa (A Study).* New Delhi: Meherchand Lachhmandas, 1977. pp. 1-21, 170-186, 140-248. [cf. Sangli (privately printed): 1955 (orig., 1947), pp. 1-16, 135-146, 185-190.]

(118) Mitra, V. (tr.) *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa.* Calcutta: Bonnerjee & Co., 1891-1899. 4 volumes.

(119) Bose, D.N. (tr.) *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha-Rāmāyaṇa.* Calcutta: Oriental Publishing Co., 1963. Last five sections only.

(120) Ganapati, S.V. (tr.) *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha-Rāmāyaṇa.* Madras, 1963. Last section only.

(121) Shastri, Hari Prasad (ed., tr.) *The World Within the Mind (Yoga-Vasishtha) Extracts from...Valmiki.* London: Shanti Sadan, 6th edition, 1980 (orig., 1937). 17 brief abstracts on yoga, and the story of Queen Chudala.

(122) Yoga Research Foundation, 6111 S.W. 74th Avenue, Miami, Florida 33143, U.S.A. Monthly journal published serially in small installments, 1977 onward.

(123) Smith, H. Daniel *A Descriptive Bibliography of the Printed Texts of the Pāñcarātrāgama: Vol. I.* Baroda: Oriental Institute (Gaekwad's Oriental Series, No. 158), 1975. pp. 4-24.

(124) Raghavan, V. "English Introduction." *Bhuśuṇḍi Rāmāyaṇa: Poorva Khand.* Varanasi: Vishwavidyalaya Prakashan, 1975. pp. 1-21, especially 2-19.

(125) Nath, L.B. (tr.) *The Adhyatma Ramayana, or the Esoteric Ramayana.* New York: AMS Press, 1974 (orig., Allahabad: 1913; "Sacred Books of the Hindus," Extra Volume I).

(126) Bagchi, P.C. "Introduction." *Adhyātma-rāmāyaṇa.* Calcutta: Metropolitan Printing and

Publishing House Ltd. (Calcutta Sanskrit Series, No. XI, A. Thakur, General Editor), 1935. pp. 1-78.

(127) Whaling, F. *The Rise of the Religious Significance of Rama.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1980.

(128) Menon, C.A. *Ezuttaccan and His Age.* Madras: University of Madras, 1940.

(129) Grierson, G.A. "On the Adbhuta Ramayana." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* IV (1926-1928):11-27.

(130) Raghavan, V. *Sanskrit Ramayanas Other than Valmiki's: The Adhyātma, the Adbhuta and the Ānanda Rāmāyaṇas.* Bombay: University of Bombay (Professor Karnik Endowment Lecture Series), in press. On the Adhyātma, Adbhuta, and Ānanda Rāmāyaṇas.

(131) Raghavan, V. "The Tattvasaṁgraharāmāyaṇa of Rāmabrahmānanda." *Annals of Oriental Research* (University of Madras) X (1952-1953):1-55. See especially pp. 10-52 for résumé.

(132) Ramanujachari, C. (tr.) *The Spiritual Heritage of Tyāgarāja.* Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math (2nd edition), 1966. See songs translated on pp. 5-8, 10, 15, 25, 43*f*., 100, 102, 105, 107, 110-121, 123-134, 136, 149-153, 155, 158*f*., 161, 166-173, 175, 178-190, 192, 194, 197, 199-216, 219-228, 230, 233-243, 246-251, 254, 258*f*., 261-263, 265*f*., 272, 277*f*., 280-283, 289-291, 293-312, 317-322, 324-330, 335-341, 344-348, 351-353, 356-358, 361*ff*., 365-367, 369, 381, 385-387, 390-399, 402, 420, 422, 424,

426-443, 445-448, 454-459, 464, 466-472, 474-484, 487-500, 504-507, 512, and many others.

The possibilities of using the narrative elements of a well-known story in order to emphasize particular themes or to advance specific ideologies were not lost on Hindu writers from an early period. Writers both anonymous and known have used the larger contours of the Rāma-story, or more often merely portions of it, or occasionally one or more prominent personalities from within it, throughout the long history of Sanskrit literature. The pieces brought together in this section of the guide cover a wide range of materials as well as a long period of time; some of the compositions noted are more obviously pedagogical in purpose than others. Some are simply religious works. But despite their diversity, it seems useful to bring all of these didactic and religious works together in one section. To do so is to emphasize that their commonality lies in the use of *Rāmāyaṇa*-motifs for ulterior purposes.

It would be rash to attempt to pinpoint when the earliest of these efforts was made. Moreover, such an attempt would be artificial so long as we separate from these efforts those made also by the Buddhists and Jains, whose uses of the Rāma-story are considered in the next section. Of the materials pertinent to this section and available in English translation, no doubt the one composed the earliest is the narrative in the *Mahābhārata* known as the "Rāmopākhyāna." This is a section of the great epic's third book, the "*Āraṇyakaparvan*," and runs to nineteen chapters, namely 257-275. It comes at a point in the action after Draupadī has been recovered and, in response to Yudhishṭhira's lament, the sage Mārkaṇḍeya recounts the humiliation of Sītā, similarly abducted, and tells of the events which led to her eventual rescue. In this recapitulation of the story--which can be conveniently read in a recent translation based on the critical text of the *Mahābhārata* (103)--the events end with Rāma's coronation once back in Ayodhyā. In other words, this early use of the Rāma-story does not include the later events of Vālmīki's "*Uttara-kāṇḍa*." One reason given for this omission accords well with our own rationale for bringing together this particular use of the Rāma-story with the other compositions in this section which also use *Rāmāyaṇa*-motifs for ulterior purposes. And, that reason points out that the "Rāmopākhyāna" section of the great epic was placed where it was, and in truncated form, for didactic considerations--namely, to emphasize that those who suffer misfortunes (like Sītā/Draupadī, like Rāma and his brother/the Pāṇḍyas) will eventually see happiness.

Just how early the "Rāmopākhyāna" section of the *Mahabhārata* was composed is a matter of no little scholarly dispute. Some hold that its formulation preceded Vālmīki's own work and indeed served as a model for it. According to them, the "*Uttara-kāṇḍa*" denouement was appended even after Vālmīki's time. Others contend that the surfacing of the truncated "Rāmopākhyāna" narrative portion of the great epic in no way detracts from the integrity of Vālmīki's seven-part work, which in any case was earlier than that particular portion of the *Mahābhārata*, and that the omission of the "*Uttara-kāṇḍa*" matters from the epic retelling attributed to Vyāsa was simply due to the fact that the later career of Rāma and Sītā was superfluous to the didactic intent of citing the well-known story in the first place. The extremely complicated issues in the debate of which is older, the "Rāmopākhyāna" section of the *Mahābhārata* or Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa*, may be glimpsed in the discussion provided by the late Professor van Buitenen in the same volume already referred to (ibid., pp. 207-214) as well as in U.P. Shah's "Introduction" to the seventh volume of the critical edition of the Vālmīki *Rāmāyaṇa* (Baroda, 1975:207-214). The late Dr. V. Raghavan has likewise reviewed the pertinent materials (104 [see pp. 11-31]).

This same Dr. Raghavan, in the same work (ibid., see pp. 33-73) also discusses what may have been an early series of efforts to use *Rāmāyaṇa*-motifs in the service of certain ideas, that is, in what is found of the Rāma-story in various of the *purāṇa*s. As before, we are here interested only in noting those materials which are available in English translations. We shall thus cite seven *purāṇa*s, alphabetically, inasmuch as it is not possible to list the works in chronological order with any certainty. The *Agni Purāṇa* (105) condenses the entire story into seven brief chapters, V-XI, one for each of Vālmīki's seven *kāṇḍa*s. This recapitulation is given in the context of other stories pertaining to different incarnations of the Lord Vishṇu, and the religious reasons for the use of the Rāma-legend are clear. Elsewhere in the same *purāṇa*, chapters CCXXXVIII-CCXLII, a large didactic section attributed to the *Rāmāyaṇa* appears in a discourse by Rāma to Lakshmaṇa on warfare, but it cannot in fact be traced to the Vālmīki original. The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (106, 107, 108) tells the entire story briefly but with sensitivity in the Ninth Canto, chapters 10 and 11, at times even echoing the words of Vālmīki. Its intent also seems to be to place Rāma in the context of *avatāra*-incarnations of the Lord Vishṇu. Much more originality is shown in the way the *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa* (109) handles parts of the Rāma-story in II:xiv and in IV:lxii. In the former place, the focus is on Sītā, her earlier birth as Vedavatī, and her safe refuge in the fire as a protected, "*chāyā*-Sītā" during the period of her supposed abduction by Rāvaṇa. In the latter occurrence, after a recapitulation of the reason for Ahalyā's curse, the Rāma-story is rehearsed with verve and inventiveness. In both instances, the effect appears to be to justify an elevated status accorded to Sītā and Rāma. The *Garuḍa Purāṇa* (110, 111) briefly tells the story twice, back to back, in chapters CXLII and CXLIII, the first time evidently as a eulogy to marital fidelity, the second time as a prelude to recounting other ancient tales. The story is also recounted twice in the *Kūrma Purāṇa* (112), in I:xx:17-56 and in II:xxxiv:112-141, in the first instance giving special emphasis to the *liṅga* Rāma set up for the worship of Śiva, in the second instance in praise of Sītā's chastity, commending her for being as "pure as Pārvatī." In the *Śiva Purāṇa* (113), Rāma is encountered wandering in the Daṇḍakā Forest by Śiva and Satī, in II:xxiv:23-xxv:42, and is presented as one who came to his task on earth at the instance of Lord Śiva. Finally, in the *Vishṇu Purāṇa*, IV:iv, the entire story is epitomized in a very few lines in the context of Vishṇu's manifestations (114).

All of these instances--and others not available in English translations--demonstrate that the compilers of the *purāṇa*s were aware of the Rāma-story and felt free to draw from it at will. In all cases, it seems clear that the Rāma-story was but one among many which they employed to their own ends. To be sure, it is also quite possible that the sections using the Rāma-themes were interpolated into the *purāṇa*s at a later time when those "ancient" tracts were recompiled in the wake of the *bhakti* movements. Whatever the case, it is clear that the "*Uttara-kāṇḍa*" portions of the Vālmīki original were used by several of the *puraṇa* writers.

It was probably at a later date, and also probably in response to impulses generated within the *bhakti* movements, that the Rāmaite Upanishads came to be composed. It seems clear that they reflect an existing cult of devotion to Rāma, which came as a later development. Hindu tradition has since accorded four of these Upanishadic productions status among the "108" most authoritative texts. Three of these, the "*Rāma-pūrva-tāpanīyopanishad*," the "*Rāmottara-tāpanīyopanishad*," and the "*Rāma-rahasyopanishad*," were translated in the mid-1940s (115), while the fourth, a Śākta-inspired work known as the "*Sīta-Upaniṣad*," came out in the mid-1950s (116). All of these are reliable translations.

Yet another kind of poetic composition has to be mentioned in this section, since poetry of the *kāvya*-tradition has been treated earlier. Sometime between the 11th and the mid-13th centuries,* there appeared a sprawling work of more than 32,000 *ślokas*. It soon came to be quoted as an authoritative text in Advaita Vedānta philosophical circles, and it became so popular that by 1600 A.D., the poem had been rendered from its original Sanskrit into Tamil verse. The composition is perhaps best known by the title *Yoga-Vāsishṭha-Rāmāyaṇa*. But it is sometimes also called the *Mahārāmāyaṇa*. Presumably the prefix "*mahā*-" is appended in deference to the "great" philosophical teachings the poem conveys, though also perhaps in acknowledgment of its sheer bulk, which exceeds Vālmīki's original. Or, the "*mahā*-" could be eulogistically appended in honor of its style and poetic pretensions. Another name by which it is recognized is *Arṣa-rāmāyaṇa*, a title which alludes to its "ancient" origin at the hands of Vālmīki who is, according to the text, its author.* Alternate names found attached to a work--the Tamil adaptation in verse of the *Yoga-Vāsishṭha* already mentioned, by Alavandar Madavapattar, is known as the *Jñāna-Vāsishṭham*--often merely attest to that work's popularity and by the same token, also possibly to its importance. We shall refer to this work by the first of the titles mentioned, as that is also the name used in the translations of it available in English (118, 119, 120, 121, 122).

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*Although some scholars insist that it was "certainly before the ninth century," perhaps somewhere even between the fifth and ninth centuries.

The dramatic invention used by the *Yoga-Vāsishṭha-Rāmāyaṇa* is that prior to Rāma's departure with Viśvāmitra, his preceptor, and with Lakshmaṇa, his brother, on the excursion which takes them finally to Mithilā, the prince must be roused from a state of ascetic equanimity which has rendered him too other-worldly to perform mundane activities. To

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*This claim--that it is a teaching recorded originally by Vālmīki himself--is patently a bid for authority by the author(s) of a much later work. The dependence on and the presupposition of the Vālmīki original by the *Yoga-Vāsishṭha-Rāmāyaṇa* can be clearly demonstrated by resort to a close scrutiny of both works--see (117), pp. 6*ff*.--and need not lead to the traditional but untenable conclusion that Vālmīki wrote the *Yoga-Vāsishṭha-Rāmāyaṇa* after having completed his "other" epic.

engender in him an attitude "proper" for one in the world, the sage Vasishṭha is called upon to speak to the young man. What Vasishṭha tells Rāma, then, is the body of the poetic piece--a didactic contrivance if ever there was one! The voluminous instruction, interwoven with some 55 tales and anecdotes, is divided into six topical sections: on renunciation (33 chapters), on discipline (20 chapters), on cosmogony (122 chapters), on epistemology and psychology (62 chapters), on egoism's cure (93 chapters), and on nirvāṇa (128 + 216 chapters). In recent years, the interwoven tales and anecdotes have attracted the interest of a handful of American Indologists who are concerned with identifying their allusive literary references and their mythic analogues. For our purposes here, however, the importance of the *Yoga-Vāsishṭha-Rāmāyaṇa* is that, while it is a poem based on the Rāma-story (and a poem which has literary merit in its own right), it uses the authority of the Rāma-tradition mainly to enhance the prestige of the particular pastiche of Vedānta philosophy mixed with Sāṁkhya ideas which it seeks to promulgate.

The surfacing of the Rāma-cult in the wake of the *bhakti* movements brought into circulation other kinds of literature in addition to those already noted. There are *māhātmyam*s ["eulogies"] of sacred places associated with Rāmaism; digests containing guides for worship for Rāmaites, including *saṃhitā*s and other tantric-inspired texts; and psalms and songs of praise addressed to Rāma's Holy Name. Not all of these categories are represented in the materials available to us in English translations. Some are available only in abbreviated condensations; the so-called *Agastya-saṃhitā*, for example, a digest containing guides for worship of Rāma as the central figure of a *bhakti* cult of worship, is one such tantric-inspired work available only in an abbreviated résumé (123). In this work,* Rāma is identified with Ultimate Reality. According to the injunctions of this sectarian text--which may have originated in Banaras--Rāma (or an image into which his divine presence has been invoked) is to be approached by means of appropriate and specific *mantra*s, *yantra*s, *dhyāna*, *japa*, *pūjā*, etc. The fact that this text is mentioned in such works posterior to it as the *Bhuśuṇḍi Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa* indicates that the *Agastya-saṃhitā* must have been an influential text.

The *Bhuśuṇḍi Rāmāyaṇa* has not yet been translated into English, but a substantial rehearsal of its contents is available (124). It is a long work in four *khāṇḍa*s, each of which contains many chapters. The composition is also known as the *Bṛihad-Rāmāyaṇa* ("vast," "lengthy"), as *Mahā-Rāmāyaṇa* ("great," "large"--an epithet which could cause it to be confused with the *Yoga-Vāsishṭha-Rāmāyaṇa*, also sometimes referred to as "*Mahārāmāyaṇa*"), as *Ādi-Rāmāyaṇa* ("foremost," "premier"), and as *Kuku-Bhuśuṇḍi Rāmāyaṇa*--which simply demonstrates to the alert reader of this survey that, as evidenced by its several alternate titles, this particular restatement of the Rāma-theme was a popular, widely regarded piece. As a sectarian text stressing *bhakti* ("devotion") to the Lord Rāma and, further, employing amorous imagery reminiscent of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, it may be dated in the 14th century. It borrows more

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*Also known as the "*Agastya-sūtīkshṇa-saṃvada*" because it is a dialogue between the sages Sūtīkṣṇa and Agastya.

than imagery from the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*--for in it, Rāma is clearly an *avatāra* exercising his *līlā* in much the same way as Krishṇa, when his time comes, will play out his. Sītā, as the divine *avatāra*'s consort, is also given a particularly significant place in the unfolding theology which informs this treatment. The elevated and ideal role given to Rāma in this work may well have influenced Tulsīdās, noted above, because he mentions the *Bhuśuṇḍi Rāmāyaṇa* in the First Book of his *Rāmacaritamānasa*. The influence of this work, indeed, would seem to have extended well beyond the most famous of the writers of the Rāma-story and exerted itself on other authors during the late medieval period (see [144], below, pp. 375-504, especially 490*ff*.)

But one of the most influential reworkings of the theme was to appear not quite a century later, in the late 14th or early 15th century.* This was the *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa* ("Spiritual Rāmāyaṇa" or "Esoteric Rāmāyaṇa"). A full translation of it in English is available for study (125), and there are at least two substantial introductory essays useful to those approaching it for the first time (126; see also 127, pp. 95-218 passim). Like Vālmīki's version, it, too, is divided into seven *kāṇḍa*-sections; they bear the same names as in the original *Rāmāyaṇa*. But the entire work, while it follows the familiar story with remarkable fidelity, is considerably shorter. Altogether it contains only some 4300 verses in 66

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*This date obviously exludes the possibility that the *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa* influenced Kamban's earlier work. Similarities between the two works must be explained by other means. The *Adhyātma* text makes mention of "diverse Rāmāyaṇas" (Ayodhyā IV:77).

chapters--"*Bālakāṇḍa*," "*Ayodhyākāṇḍa*," "*Araṅyakāṇḍa*," "*Kishkindhākāṇḍa*," "*Sundarakāṇḍa*," "*Yuddhakāṇḍa*," and "*Uttarakāṇḍa*, containing, respectively, eight, nine, ten, nine, five, sixteen, and nine chapters. Throughout, several philosophical discourses are added, making it clear that the primary purpose of this work --however well it rehearses the narrative while at the same time adding its own innovative touches--is to provide an Advaita philosophical base for Rāmaite cult teachings. In this document, Rāma is an omniscient, cosmic being whose willingness to obey the dictates of an assumed human destiny is the pretext for accomplishing his divine purposes.* Further, Sītā is treated as the eternal consort of the Lord. Accordingly, the closing events of the traditional story--Sītā's abandonment, the birth of Lava and Kuśa, the final separation of Sītā and Rāma--seem to be employed chiefly as a resolution for getting the cosmic couple eventually reunited in Vaikuṇṭha (see "*Uttarakāṇḍa*" IV:32*ff*.)

A number of devices used in the telling of the *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa* are worth noting in regard to parallels found in other, similar works, whether originating in those other texts or employed by them later under the influence of the *Adhyātma*. For one thing, the whole is set within the framework of a dialogue between Mahādeva (Śiva) and Pārvatī, the latter asking her lord why, if Rāma is the Supreme Being, he had to be reminded of his true identity during the course of his sorrow over the loss of Sītā (see "*Bālakāṇḍa*" II:6*ff*., cf. "*Uttarakāṇḍa*" IX:69 et

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*See the dialogue introduced in the opening chapter of "*Ayodhyākāṇḍa*" between Rāma and the sage Nārada.

seq.). Śiva's complete answer to this query is, of course, the bulk of the composition. This kind of framework dialogue is a common pattern found in the medieval religious literature of the *āgamas*, *tantras* and *saṃhitās*, and in fact what is found as the inner core of the *Agastya-saṃhitā*, noted above. It is also a conceit preserved by Tulsīdās later in his *Rāmacaritamānasa*. For another thing, the brief description of the childhood antics of Rāma is reminiscent of the boyhood pranks of Krishṇa celebrated in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* and elsewhere; this is but another instance of what has been referred to as the "bhāgavatization" of the Rāma cult along about this time. Still another thing is the fact that it is King Daśaratha's realization that he is aging which prompts him to abdicate in favor of his son, Rāma (see "*Ayodhyākāṇḍa*" II:3)--a detail we have already noted in Kālidāsa's earlier *Raghuvaṁśa* and in Tulsīdās' subsequent *Rāmacaritamanasa*. Also of note in the *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa* is the theme of a "protected" Sītā used as a device to maintain her chastity when under Rāvaṇa's domination; in this case the "real" Sītā is made to reside in a fire while an "illusory" Sītā is abducted, the "real" Sītā being restored from the flames after Rāma's triumph over Rāvaṇa (see "*Araṅyakāṇḍa*" VII:1-4 et seq. and "*Yuddhakāṇḍa*" XIII: 19*ff*.). This is used later by Tulsīdās, just as it seems to have been prefigured in the *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa* II:xiv:30*ff*. (109 [I:127*f*.]), in the *Kūrma Purāṇa* II:xxxiii:115*ff*, (112 [pp. 479-481]), and elsewhere (reportedly in the *Adbhuta Rāmāyaṇa* and in the *Yoga-Vāsishṭha-Rāmāyaṇa* in similar but not identical ways). Yet another thing in the *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa* deserves notice, this also in regard to the abduction of Sītā by Rāvaṇa: here Sītā seems to be lifted up by Rāvaṇa along with the earth around her (?"*Araṅyakāṇḍa*" VII:51*f*.), a convention used earlier in Kamban's version (36, 37, 38) and, even earlier, in a Tibetan version (50). This action seems, at least in the *Adhyātma*, vaguely redundant in view of the fact that the "real" Sītā is already safely "protected" in the fire. A final thing to remark is the series of eulogies on the text itself and/or on the salvific power of repeating the Holy Name (see "*Bālakāṇḍa*" I:22*ff*., 29; "*Araṅyakāṇḍa*" IV:48; "*Kishkindhākāṇḍa*" I:84, VI:75*ff*.; "*Uttarakāṇḍa*" I:63, IX:64; etc.). This attitude was to have a pronounced influence on Tulsīdās, and is certainly one which reflects something essential about the later development of Rāma-*bhakti* (cf. 123 [18 and 6*f*.]).

In addition, there are three passages of the *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa* text which have also become important to later Rāma *bhakta*s; these remain crucially significant to them even today. All three passages are memorized, repeated, and meditated upon by the pious. They are the so-called "*Rāma-Gītā*" section, which is the same as "*Uttarakāṇḍa*" V:7-62 (cf. *Bālakāṇḍa*" I:46-58); the "*Rāmahṛidaya*" passage, which is found in "*Bālakāṇḍa*" II:44-56 (cf. "*Bālakāṇḍa*" I:43-45); and the "*Rāma-mantra*," one version of which is articulated in "*Araṅyakāṇḍa*" VIII:34-35.* There is reason to believe that all of these are older than the *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa* text which contains them. But that book, too, has taken on a sanctity in its own right, and it is regularly repeated in toto as part of the *Rāma-navamī* festival of nine days each spring

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*A fourth passage may also be noted as having gained great authority, that is, Ahalyā's hymn to Rāma, found in "*Bālakāṇḍa*" VI:43-59.

season in *Caitra*-month when Rāma's birth is commemorated (cf. "*Bālakāṇḍa*" I:38-41, 59-60).

Beyond the influence it had upon Tulsīdās who, as we have already noted, is one of the most widely known popularizers of the Rāma-theme, the *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa* was also translated into other languages. Most noteworthy among those translations was the one into Malayalam, done in the latter part of the 16th century by Tuñcat Rāmānujan Ezhuttaccan (128). This poet-saint from the *śūdra*-ranks is known as the "Father of Modern Malayalam" and the "Prince of Malayalam Poets." It is not merely hyperbolic to say that every Hindu home in Malabar had its copy of this work--his version of the *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa* being known also as the *Ezhuttaccan Rāmāyaṇa*. Even today there are many Malayali-speaking Hindus who read portions of the *Ezhuttaccan Rāmāyaṇa* (= *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa*) every day.

Another work of interest at this point, one which also reflects the development of the Rāma-cult which surfaced in the wake of the *bhakti* movements, is the *Adbhuta Rāmāyaṇa*. This is available in English only in the form of a summary (129) and a discussion (130). It purports to be the "eighth" *kāṇḍa* of Vālmīki's original, but it is patently a late work; in fact, it is a comparatively modern composition. Its most noteworthy feature is that in it Sītā, as Rāma's *śakti*, is exalted above Rāma as more powerful than he. At least in the closing chapters (*sārga*s 17-27), in imitation of the *Devī Māhātmyam* and reminiscent also of the Bengali version noted above on page 48, Sītā is no longer the gracious female figure of Vālmīki's vision but appears as a gaunt, hungry, unkempt ogress complete with a garland of skulls and a lolling tongue. While Rāma's feat of slaying the ten-headed Rāvaṇa is acknowledged, it is given to her to dispatch the thousand-headed Rāvaṇa as well as his armies. Also calling itself, somewhat ingenuously, the *Ārṣa Rāmāyaṇa* ["The Ancient Rāmāyaṇa" (cf. *Yoga-Vāsishṭha-Rāmāyaṇa*, above)], this *Adbhuta Rāmāyaṇa* stands as a monument to a curious effort to blend Śaiva Śāktism with Vaiṣṇavism. According to Grierson (129 [p. 15]), " ... Its chief value is as a storehouse of folk-legends," most of which materials are not found elsewhere associated with the Rāma-story.

Sometime late in the 18th century, a South Indian writer named Rāmabrahmānanda produced a work of some 186 chapters called the *Tattvasaṁgraha Rāmāyaṇa*. Although it is not available in translation, a detailed description of it has been prepared and published (131). Like Vālmīki's original it, too, is divided into seven *kāṇḍa*s (containing 35, 32, 20, 18, 17, 42, and 22 *sārga*s respectively). The best way to describe it is as a thesaurus, or treasury, of uplifting Rāma-lore. As such, it is an important document for giving insight into how the Rāma-cult of not very long ago used the Rāma-story in order to inculcate ideals; hence it serves as an index to the basis for the content of the faith of the late 18th century. The "*saṁgraha*" in the title points to the anthological nature of the piece, which quotes, among other works, the already-mentioned *Rāma-tāpanīyopanishad*s, the *Agastya-saṃhitā*, and the *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa* as well as several *purāṇa*s; the "*tattva*" in the title indicates that the collection seeks to present the inner truth and esoteric significance about the figure (Rāma) who stands at the center of the Rāmaites' living faith.

Finally, the many psalms, *stotra*s, and songs of praise which also issued from within the Rāma-cult should be given their due. Most of these selections currently in translation lie scattered here and there in monographs (e.g., [151], below) where the materials used may be cited merely as incidental illustration given to enhance a particular thesis. But in at least one case, more than 500 songs of one composer have been brought together and translated, thus making available among them page after page of some of the composer's choice lyrics in praise of his chosen deity, Rāma (132). This composer is Tyāgarāja (1767-1846), the Karnatic musical genius and saint who saw in the fashioning of musical statements a path of salvation [*gāna-mārga*] equivalent to other, more conventional paths of wisdom, works and worship. The fervor of his faith and the eloquence of his lyric testimony render these songs useful study pieces for the student who would seek to learn more about how faith in Rāma asserted itself in a particular, gifted individual. Although many of Tyāgarāja's songs were written in Telugu, many are also conveyed in Sanskrit--for which reason his work is mentioned here rather than above in the section on popular regional versions.

THE RĀMA-THEME
IN NON-HINDU INDIAN SOURCES

(133) Francis, H.T. (tr.) *The Jātaka, or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births*. London: Luzac & Co., 1957 (orig., Cambridge, University Press, 1901). Vol. IV:78-82; see also VI:38-52; V:79-84, 100-106, 42-48; VI:246-305.

(134) Fausboll, V. (tr.) *The Jātakas*. London: Trübner & Co., Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1877, 1879, 1883, 1887, 1891, 1896, 1897. 7 volumes. See #461, 513, 519, 526, 540, 547.

(135) Chandra, K.R. *A Critical Study of Paumacariyam*. Vaishali: Research Institute of Prakrit, Jainology & Ahimsa (Prakrit Jain Institute Research Publications Series, Vol. 4), 1970. pp. 4-117, especially 18-32.

(136) Kulkarni, V.M. "Introduction." *Ācārya Vimalasūri's Paumacariya with Hindi Translation: Part I*. Varanasi: Prakrit Text Society (Prakrit Text Society Series, No. 6), 1962. pp. 1-40.

(137) Johnson, Helen M. (tr.) *Triṣaṣṭaśalākā-puruṣacarita, or the Lives of Sixty-Three Illustrious Persons by Acarya Śrī Hemacandra, Vol. IV* . Baroda: Oriental Institute (Gaekwad's Oriental Series, No. CXXV), 1954. pp. 107-352.

(138) Rice, L. (ed.) *The Pampa Ramayana, or Ramachandra Charita Purāṇa of Abhinava Pampa*. Bangalore: Mysore Government Central Press (Bibliotheca Carnatica, No. 3), 1892 (orig., Bangalore:

Mysore Government Press, 1892). General contours of poem, pp. 9-16; verse-by-verse condensation in English, 17-95 (orig., pp. 7-12 and 13-76, respectively).

The use of elements taken from the Rāma-theme is not limited to Hindu sources. Two Buddhist versions of the story (51, 52) have already been noted, and the Jainas as well drew from the rich heritage, fashioning their retellings to inculcate Jaina religious values. In later times even the Sikhs celebrated the heroic figure of Rāma. The tenth Guru, Govinda Singh (1666-1708), wrote 864 cantos about the Prince of Ayodhyā, employing 71 different types of meter in the process (see [144], pp. 510-533). But very few of these extra-Hindu Indian versions are available in English translations, and we must limit our attention to those available for English-reading students.

Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa*, despite its preëminence as "*Ādi-kāvya*," was not the first time a Rāma-related tale was ever told. Evidently, even Vālmīki shaped his narrative from numerous, "floating" stories. What makes his version so authoritative is the coherent manner in which he puts the various composite elements together, stamping the whole with the genius of his epic vision. One of the earliest, "other" surviving versions of Rāma's heroic adventures is found not in a Sanskrit text, but in a Pāli canonical scripture of Buddhism. It is a piece which probably predates Vālmīki--but that depends, to be sure, on when one chooses to date "Vālmīki," and how early or late one decides to place the *Jātaka* materials as we have them. It is usually numbered "461" in most collections, and is called "*Daśaratha*

Jātaka" (133, 134). In it, Rāma is treated as a *bodhisattva*-figure in one of the Buddha's former births.

In that Buddhist version of Rāma's youth, exile and return, there is, however, no mention of Rāvaṇa,* nor is Sītā abducted. In it, in fact, Sītā is Rāma's sister and they, along with Lakshmaṇa, are the offspring of Daśaratha, King of Banaras, and of his senior queen. When their mother dies, her co-wife/ successor wants her own recently born son, Bharata, to become heir apparent. That prompts Daśaratha to send Rāma, Sītā, and Lakshmaṇa from the kingdom for their safety for a period of [n.b.] twelve years. They retreat to a hermitage in the Himalayas. In their absence their father dies, whereupon Bharata seeks them out and petitions the three to return. Rāma, however, says that he feels compelled to obey his father's wish and to remain in exile for the full twelve years. He does, nevertheless, send Sītā and Lakshmaṇa back with Bharata. That trio rules in his stead, all the while honoring his straw slippers: if the slippers remain silent, the rulers' decisions are deemed proper, but if the slippers knock against one another, further adjudication is thereby thought necessary. At the end of the twelve years, Rāma returns and, with Sītā as his consort, is crowned king. They rule together for 16,000 years.

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*Rāvaṇa, whose career in Indian folklore is not limited to that one episode in which he was stricken by a passion for Sītā, was too popular a figure for the Buddhists to ignore altogether. He is seen later, for example, in the opening chapter of the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* where he appears as a learned interlocutor.

Another *Jātaka*, numbered "540" (133, VI:38-52), is reminiscent of Vālmīki's story of Daśaratha's shooting of the ascetic with blind parents. The Buddhist birth-stories numbered "532" and "526" (ibid., V:79-84, 100-106) parallel elements Vālmīki incorporated into his episodes concerning Ṛishyaśṛiṅga early in the "*Bāla-kāṇḍa*." And, though less obvious, similarities to Vālmīki's narrative are also found in the so-called "*Jayaddisa Jātaka*," numbered "518" (ibid., V:42-48), and "*Vessantara Jātaka*," numbered "547" (ibid., VI:246-305).

One can view the adaptation of the Rāma-story to Buddhist doctrinal requirements by looking at the appearance of versions of the epic found in countries outside of India where Buddhism flourishes as a religious presence and cultural determinant, as, for example, in Burma. But to consider that process of acculturation of the *Rāmāyaṇa* to non-Hindu systems further here is to venture beyond the scope of the present bibliography. Some suggestions for further study in this regard are given in the final, closing paragraph of this guide. At this point, it may suffice for our purposes to illustrate how elements of the Rāma-story were adapted to the needs of a non-Hindu religion by looking only at how the Jainas handled the Rāma-theme.

The earliest full-fledged Jaina narrative of Rāma, dating perhaps to the third century C.E., sets the precedent for what in subsequent Jaina Rāmāyaṇas were to become standard modifications of the story's elements. Just as in Buddhist retellings where Rāma is a *bodhisattva*, so in the Jaina recastings all of the major characters are devout Jainas. They eat no meat; sacrifices are condemned because they involve the slaughter of animals; conquest in battle is achieved by prowess and wit rather than by violence and murder. In keeping with Jaina rationalistic perspectives, there are no supernatural beasts or demons; the monkeys and the *rakshasa*s are, instead, "*vidyādhara*s," beings who have acquired magical powers by virtue of their extraordinary austerities. Indeed, miracles throughout are muted; Sītā is of natural birth; Rāvaṇa has but one head; and there is no mention of a golden deer. Such savage habits and demonic proclivities as may characterize a being are due to the accumulations of *karma*--and such beings are portrayed as victims, and with sympathy. Thus, changes in plot and motivations are prompted by concerns to stress Jaina values and principles; Jaina doctrines and beliefs are frequently set forth. Gone are the brāhmaṇical sages as models (Vasishṭha, Viśvāmitra, Agastya, et al.); in their places are ascetics and holy men of the Jaina mold. The Jaina versions of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, incidentally, usually continue up through the birth of the twin sons, the final separation of Rāma and Sītā, etc. This suggests that, even from earliest times (before Kālidāsa, as already noted on page 79), the Jainas evidenced a willingness to deal with the events also contained in Vālmīki's *Uttara-kāṇḍa*. Yet, while there is congruency at this point, in general the changes of detail introduced by the Jainas into their adaptations of the Rāma-narrative amount to a radically different accommodation of the "floating" stories than seen elsewhere.

That earliest Jaina narrative of Rāma just alluded to is the *Paumacariya* (= *Padma-carita*), by Vimalasūri. It was written in a form of Prakrit known to have been used by Jainas in Maharashtra in the early centuries of the Common Era. This work, which proved to be popular and, thus, influential on subsequent Jaina writers, is not available in a full English translation; however, an extensive discussion of its contents and a helpful résumé are available (135; see also 136).

One of the most important, later compositions influenced by Vimalasūri's accommodation of the epic tradition was the so-called *Jaina Rāmāyaṇa*. It is available in a full prose translation (137), and students would be well advised to turn to it to sample the Jaina handling of the Rāma-story. This composition was written in Sanskrit by the 12th century polymath, Hemacandra, almost a millenium after Vimalasūri. Hemacandra's handling of the Rāma-story is done in ten chapters containing more than 3700 verses, and is part of a much larger work in which he is concerned with showing how various figures known to Jainas from Indian mythology and hagiography were, indeed, models of Jaina ethics. It contains most of the elements which by his time had become normative to Jaina Rāmāyaṇas; specifically, Hemacandra's version, like Vimalasūri's also, represents a Śvetāmbara Jaina outlook.

But Hemacandra's so-called *Jaina Rāmāyaṇa* was both preceded and followed by other, notable Jaina renderings of the theme. Only one need detain us here, since it is the only one accessible to readers limited to English-language materials. A detailed résumé of it is available (138). It is also a 12th century work, but it comes from South India, where it was originally composed in Kannada, the regional language of the modern state of Karnataka. Because of its southern origin it may represent Digambara Jain sentiments. Written in the mixed verse-and-prose style known as "*campu*," it is properly called the *Rāmacandra-carita-purāṇa* ("The Ancient Story of Rāma [candra]"), although it is quite regularly referred to as the "*Pampa Rāmāyaṇa*." Its author was Nāgacandra, sometimes also called "Abhinava Pampa," that is, a "latter-day Pampa," an allusion to his literary skill, which was reminiscent of the 10th century Pampa, the greatest of all authors in the Kannada language. Nāgacandra's creation is, then, both a regional recasting of the Rāma-story into a vernacular tongue and an intentionally elegant work of literary craftsmanship. Consequently, it deserves notice alongside the various popular, regional versions of the Rāma-story noted above, as well as alongside the several poetic works in the *kāvya*-tradition already mentioned. It is discussed here, however, because it is first and foremost, for our purposes, a Jaina piece. As such, it deserves close comparison with the almost contemporary piece by Hemacandra just noted. The latter (in Sanskrit) was more interested in Jaina polemics, while the *Rāmacandra-carita-purāṇa* (in Kannada) is more clearly a work animated by poetic considerations.

While Hemacandra commenced his tale with the origins of Rāvaṇa and of the *vānara*-hordes, Nāgacandra salutes his predecessors who have told the story of Rāma before him, and he begins his exposition with the genealogy of Daśaratha. Both Nāgacandra and Hemacandra agree in calling Rāma's royal mother Aparājitā, as did also Vimalasūri. Both give Sītā a natural birth as a twin, and her male sibling, Prabhāmaṇḍala [Nāgacandra] or Bhāmaṇḍala [Hemacandra], is kidnapped at birth only to be brought back into the story later; he causes Sītā much trouble before their blood relationship is recognized (again, both following Vimalasūri). In both versions Daśaratha is prompted to abdicate after hearing a sage's account of his former lives (just as in Vimalasūri); he prefers the life of a renunciant. In both versions (again following the lead of Vimalasūri), Rāvaṇa's character rises to heights left unexplored in Vālmīki's original and, with the notable exception of Kamban who wrote about the same time, not imagined by other authors recasting the Rāma-story into regional versions during the same time frame. In both versions (as in Vimalasūri), Sītā is abandoned after Rāvaṇa's death and her own reunion with Rāma; whereupon, after the birth of her twin sons, and an ordeal designed to prove her purity, Sītā takes up the habits of a Jaina nun for the remainder of her days. As for Rāma, after Lakshmaṇa's death (following Vimalasūri), he keeps his brother's corpse for many months, then enters the Jaina order as a monk, performs heroic mortifications and finally achieves liberation. To be sure, there are significant and numerous differences in detail between the two versions (and between each of them and Vimalasūri, too). In fact, it is difficult to know which is more useful in considering the two nearly contemporary Jaina versions of the Rāma-story: the differences or the similarities between Nāgacandra and Hemacandra. Either way, their comparison with Hindu versions of the tale will prove instructive to students interested on the one hand in discovering something about Jaina popular polemics in the context of a predominantly Hindu culture and, on the other hand, in seeing how a legend such as the Rāma-story undergoes yet another radical transformation while still remaining recognizable in its general contours.

POSTSCRIPT:
DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

(139) Sen, N. "The Influence of the Epics on Indian Life and Literature." *The Cultural Heritage of India*. Calcutta: The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, 1962 (2nd edition, revised and enlarged). Vol. II:95-118, especially 95-106.

(140) Dell, D.J. (ed.) *Guide to Hindu Religion.* Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1981.

(141) Pusalker, A.D. "Epic and Puranic Studies." *Progress of Indic Studies*. R.N. Dandekar (ed.) Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1942. See especially pp. 131-138.

(142) Gore, M.A. *A Bibliography of the Ramayana*. Poona: privately printed, 1943.

(143) Baroda Board of Editors. *The Vālmīki-Rāmāyaṇa: Critical Edition.* Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1960-1975. 7 volumes.

(144) Raghavan, V. (ed.) *The Rāmāyaṇa Tradition in Asia*. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1980.

(145) Tawney, C.H. (tr.) *The Ocean of Story... Somadeva's Kathā Sarit Sāgara.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1968 (orig., London: 1925). Vol. IV: 126-130; VIII:44 .

(146) Sternbach, L. "Quotations from the Ramayana in the Katha Literature." *Journal of the*

Oriental Institute, Baroda 15, No. 3-4 (March-June 1966):236-251.

(147) Sivaramamurti, C. *Rāmo Vigrahavān Dharmaḥ: Rama Embodiment of Righteousness.* New Delhi: Kanak Publications, 1980.

(148) Aryan, K.C. and Subhashini Aryan. *Hanuman in Art and Mythology*. Delhi: Rekha Prakashan, n.d. [1975?]

(149) Vatsyayan, Kapila. *Ramayana in the Arts of Asia*. Teheran: Asian Cultural Documentation Centre for UNESCO, 1975.

(150) Mittal, J. *Andhra Paintings of the Ramayana*. Hyderabad: Andhra Pradesh Lalit Kala Akademi, 1969.

(151) Hein, N. *The Miracle Plays of Mathurā.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972. pp. 17-30, 55-69, and especially 70-103, 105-125.

(152) Gargi, Balwant. *Folk Theatre of India.* Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966. pp. 90-113.

(153) Vatsyayan, Kapila. *Traditional Indian Theatre: Multiple Streams*. New Delhi: National Book Trust, 1980.

(154) Chatterjee, B.R. "The Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata in South-East Asia." *The Cultural Heritage of India*. Calcutta: The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, 1962 (2nd edition, revised and enlarged). Vol. II:119-132, especially 119-130.

(155) Raghavan, V. *The Ramayana in Greater India*. Surat: South Gujerat University, 1975. See pp. 169-182 for "Bibliography."

The preceding bibliographic guide has sought to identify only major literary variants based on the Rāma-story, limiting notice to those compositions originating in India which are available in English translation or resumé. A student unfamiliar with the breadth of Indian literature must be reminded that what has been noted above is merely a small number of the hundreds of Indian literary documents based on elements of the Rāma-epic. Most remain in their original languages. What has been provided here is but a sketchy delineation of the tip of the proverbial iceberg; the bulk remains hidden from view.

For those who wish a view of the broader scope which includes mention of works still untranslated, the pioneering work already mentioned by Father Camille Bulcke (see page vii, above), will soon be available in English from an Australian press. Meanwhile, shorter surveys in some of the works cited in the foregoing sections also provide useful, panoramic introductions to the Rāma-literature of Indian origin (e.g., 44, 45, 65). It might be more helpful to turn to one of the many essays specifically designed to provide an overview of the influence of the Rāma-theme on Indian literatures (e.g., 139).

In the preceding pages there are only occasional notices of the innumerable works reflecting upon and analyzing the primary texts named in this guide. No attempt has been made herein to identify commentaries on the texts. Because the number of base-texts is large and, accordingly, their various interpretations

--whether classical or contemporary--are even more numerous, a separate bibliography would be desirable in order to account for them adequately (even though the actual count of such derivative reflections in English translation is not great). In addition, students concerned with locating pertinent, secondary studies which treat various aspects of the specific compositions here cited, including materials relating to text-critical studies and to considerations of historical or thematic contexts, must realize that there is as yet no integrated and comprehensive instrument for bibliographical retrieval of such studies. Renou's and, later, Dandekar's Vedic bibliographies (1931 and 1946, respectively) simply exclude *Rāmāyaṇa*-related references as being outside the scope of their otherwise impressive surveys--as does also, regrettably, a recent American enterprise of ambitious dimensions (140). A.D. Pusalker attempted in 1942 to review what had been done in *Rāmāyaṇa*-related studies in the preceding decade or two (141); and, a year later, M.A. Gore followed with a bibliography containing 366 entries specifically on *Rāmāyaṇa* texts, editions, translations, adaptations, critical literature, studies and articles (142). But the first was obviously limited in scope, and the second was faulted by reviewers of the time as inadequate to the task even then. Since the '40s countless additional books, essays, articles in journals, chapters in anthologies, new editions and translations have appeared. But they remain scattered and, for the most part, uncatalogued for retrieval purposes. There is at present (early '80s) under production at Pune, India, an encyclopedic bibliography on *Rāmāyaṇa*-related scholarship. The work is being undertaken by a government-recognized research and cultural institute called the "Shreeram

Kosha Mandal." It remains to be seen how effectively this group will be able to bring together--and to publish the results so that others may use them--so many diverse resources on the same subject. It is not yet clear what proportion of the entries in the proposed bibliography will refer to English-language materials.*

The present writer has recently compiled a listing (not annotated) of more than 800 titles of secondary studies based on *Rāmāyaṇa*-related themes, noting monographs, chapters in books, published articles and the like in English. These materials are arranged in such general categories as "textual studies," "interpretive essays," "character analyses," "literary and thematic inquiries," as well as around such controversial topics as "dates of authors/texts," "location of Laṅkā," and so on. It is hoped that, like the present bibliography, that listing will one day be made available to interested students and teachers.

Meanwhile, for those who wish to acquaint themselves with some of the current issues and interests in *Rāmāyaṇa*-related research, a good place to begin is in the introductory sections in each of the seven volumes of the Baroda Critical Edition of the Vālmīki text (143). Those seven essays are in English, although their approaches may be too advanced for beginning students. The *Journal of the Oriental Research Institute, Baroda* has in recent years published a number of significant studies by scholars involved in the production of the critical edition of the Vālmīki *Rāmāyaṇa*. Back issues may be culled for treatment of topics specific to one's interests. Beyond these, the *Proceedings and Transactions* of the All-India Oriental Conference, held at regular intervals since its inception in 1920, invariably contain sections with papers on *Rāmāyaṇa*-related matters. Many large libraries in North America as well as India hold back issues of the publications commemorating those ongoing conferences, which are not, however, to be confused with the single meeting, in 1972, of the All-India Ramayana Conference, which produced a single *Souvenir* volume (1973). In addition, the Sahitya Akademi (National Academy of Letters) in New Delhi contemplates the formation of an International Ramayana Society as an outgrowth of an International Ramayana Seminar organized in 1975. Papers from that 1975 seminar have been published by the Akademi in a volume entitled *The Rāmāyaṇa Tradition in Asia* (144), and the contents of that solid volume provide rewarding reading for interested students on the variants on the Rāma-theme found in India as well as in South and Southeast Asia. In fact, no single book can compare with this one for variety of treatments coupled with rigor of scholarship. It is highly recommended for anyone seriously interested in *Rāmāyaṇa*-related studies.

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At the beginning of this guide, the focus was stated to be mainly on the literary variants of the Rāma-theme which originated in India. Accordingly, notices of *Rāmāyaṇa*-inspired motifs finding expression in cultural phenomenon that do not ordinarily qualify as "texts" have been omitted. Suggestions as to some directions interested readers may take in order to acquaint themselves further with the manifestations of the Rāma-theme in Indian literature generally, in art and in popular performance, are set forth in this postscript.

Because allusions to Rāma and his company are so numerous and diffuse in Indian literary works, it would be impossible to catalogue all such occurences. Vālmīki and/or other shapers of the Rāma-tradition are quite often quoted. Sometimes allusions to the epic-theme may be substantial and other times made merely in passing. In order to make the frames of reference more concrete here, two different (but not unrelated) sources are here cited as paradigmatic for what remains for further consideration. In the first instance, one finds illustrated in context how the saga of Rāma is referred to, and tersely recapitulated, among other stories told serially. In "The Ocean of Story," or the *Kathāsaritsāgara* (145--a kind of Hindu "Arabian Nights"--by Somadeva, an 11th century Kashmiri poet), the story of Rāma is rehearsed in two different places. In one it is told in four paragraphs, and in the other in only one. In the second instance, the citation is to an article which collates quotations in Indian *katha*-literature (i.e., stories, fables, anecdotes, legends, etc.) from the *Rāmayaṇa* (146; cf. [104], above). These two references serve to call attention to other ways in which the consciousness of the Rāma-story has insinuated itself into Indian literature.

As for manifestations of the Rāma-theme in the visual arts of India, modern scholars appear to have explored them but little. Particularly when compared with the many monographs on Krishṇa-themes found in Hindu sculpture and painting, the paucity of materials on Rāma-related motifs is the more notable. No doubt many art historians have correctly identified in passing the stone and metal likenesses of Rāma and his entourage as well as temple sculptural programs and miniature and mural paintings deriving from the Rāma-story; but there seem to be few observers who have felt moved to bring together all the evidence to demonstrate how widespread the phenomenon is. Students interested in the visual arts may, nonetheless, find assistance in their own, private explorations of such matters by looking at four fairly recent publications. The first, which is both the most recent and probably the most eloquent testimony to what remains to be done, is by the late, eminent Indian art historian, C. Sivaramamurti (147). His seventy illustrations serve to document the variety of time and place which yields up visual art inspired by the Rāma-story, more thoroughly than heretofore found in any other single book. The second publication is by K.S. and Subhashini Aryan, who have done for the art deriving from the Hanumān cult (148) what no one else has done before. The third is by the gifted and articulate authority on the visual and performing arts in South Asia, Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan (149). Dr. Vatsyayan, at this writing the Joint Educational Adviser in the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Government of India, has provided an informative overview of a complex subject in her readable book. The final publication noted here is by J. Mittal (150), who takes the miniatures in an 18th century illuminated manuscript of the *Rāmāyaṇa* as the basis for a study of painting in South India.

Much remains to be done. Folk art renditions of the Rāma-theme still stand neglected. Nonetheless, the persevering student who turns to one or more of the four books just mentioned will find clues which will lead to some of the (relatively few) available studies in the visual arts which treat *Rāmāyaṇa*-inspired imagery.

Students interested in how the Rāma-story influences contemporary performance have several books available to them, three of which are noted here. These three provide, among other things, insight into the colorful "*Rāmlīlā*" pageants staged outdoors each September/October throughout Northern India, dramatic cycles celebrating Rāma's heroic divinity according to Tulsīdās' interpretation. The best among these--and a must for serious students--is Norvin Hein's study (151) based on his observations in the Mathurā region in North India. Hein provides good historical treatment of the form itself, and also gives some literal translations of the Hindi accompaniment recorded at actual performances. The others (152, 153) are both more general works, one written by the Indian theatre historian Balwant Gargi, who clearly describes what goes on during "*Rāmlīlā*," and the other written by the perceptive Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan, who knows firsthand the performers' concerns and who therefore approaches the various performing arts with an intimacy and immediacy difficult to gainsay. Either of these two latter treatments are recommended to students with no prior knowledge of Indian dramatic traditions.

Finally, it remains to indicate how the motivated student may move out from the confines of this bibliographic essay focusing on Indian variants on the Rāma-theme, into Greater India, where the Rāma-story in manifold form has been so well known for so many centuries. B.R. Chatterjee's short essay in *The Cultural Heritage of India*, available in many college libraries, is a good starting point for the beginning student. It is brief, yet provides cogent detail (154; see also [46], above). The motivated student may well find V. Raghavan's book-length treatment, *The Ramayana in Greater India* (155), more satisfying still. Separate chapters of the book are given over to the theme as it manifests itself in Sri Lanka, Tibet, Khotan, Mongolia, Siberia, China, Japan, Laos, Champa, Cambodia, Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Burma, the countries' names, indeed, serving as the chapter titles. Throughout his book, the late, great scholar afforded leads to the works of others where specific matters may be found treated more fully. The subject is, to be sure, a vast one. Some of the same areas are also treated in papers constituting *The Ramayana Tradition in Asia* already mentioned (144). A volume under preparation by Professor Suresh Awasti of Delhi University, containing contributions by various authorities, will specifically feature essays dealing with the *Rāmāyaṇa*-tradition in the arts in such countries as Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia and Thailand. Indeed, the area of study of the Rāma-traditions in Asia is so vast that the student is perhaps best advised to approach the study on a country-by-country basis, whether dealing with the transformations of the story in those regions or with the arts. In any case, however inviting the pursuit of such investigations may seem to users of this guide, the *Rāmāyaṇa*-related traditions outside India present another subject altogether, one beyond the scope set for the systematic treatment herein provided.

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